COMMUNING WITH COMMUNISM

WILLIAM B. LIPPHARD

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COMMUNING WITH COMMUNISM

The world-famous Cathedral of St. Basil on the Red Square in Moscow. It was built during the reign of Czar Ivan the Terrible, who is said to have put out the eyes of the architect so that he might not duplicate its ornamental and richly colored architecture elsewhere. It is now a museum

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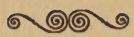
COMMUNING WITH COMMUNISM

A NARRATIVE OF IMPRESSIONS OF SOVIET RUSSIA

By WILLIAM B. LIPPHARD



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To

My Wife

HELEN DICKINSON LIPPHARD

Who Communed with Communism

In Absentia

FOREWORD

In the late summer of 1930 the author made a visit to Soviet Russia. This book is largely a travel narrative of that visit and a record of its impressions. Only indirectly does it offer an appraisal of communism as a political or economic system or attempt an evaluation of the stupendous social experiment now going on in Russia. This should be understood by the reader.

Most of the contents of the book were given in thirty or more lectures during the past winter before men's clubs, American Legion Posts, university groups, ministers' conferences, women's societies, church congregations, and religious conventions. Nearly all of the chapters were outlined on the returning railroad journey through Europe while the memory of what had been seen had lost none of its vividity and the hieroglyphic entries in a notebook were still

decipherable. Such a notebook under present conditions in Russia is more precious than gold. For lost gold can be regained, but the loss or confiscation of a notebook is an irretrievable disaster.

Many of the chapters were originally published in several journals as special articles. Grateful acknowledgment is therefore made to Dr. Robert A. Ashworth, Editor of *The Baptist*; to Dr. Howard B. Grose, Editor of *Missions*, and to Mr. John C. Draper, Editor of *The New York Sun*, for their kind permission to reprint these chapters. The author is indebted to his friend, Dr. Frederick E. Taylor, who first suggested their publication in book form. Grateful appreciation is also due Miss Eva M. Edwards, the author's secretary, for her efficient assistance in preparing the manuscript.

The illustrations with few exceptions are from photographs taken by the author. The poster reproductions are from originals purchased in government poster shops.

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I

A NEW CIVILIZATION

WHILE traveling across the broad Polish plain to the border of Russia I shared my *wagon-lit* compartment for part of the journey with a Russian on his return trip from America. He had spent several weeks over a wide itinerary in a study of factory management in the United States. Since he spoke fluently Russian, French, German, and English, conversation was easy. Naturally we discussed the two countries, serenely confident in the privacy of our Polish railway compartment. He had the advantage of having lived in Russia and of having observed conditions in America; whereas I had only the background of America, my own knowledge of Russia being limited to brief contacts in connection with relief-work after the war and to what I had read in the intervening years. So we spent the hours in illuminating discussion as the

train journeyed on its way. The political system; the economic situation with its terrific shortage of food and goods as an aftermath of the World War, from which Russia had not yet recovered; the turmoil of the revolution; the feverish tempo of the Five-Year Industrial Program; the cultural development of the nation; its religious disintegration—all the phases of the communist régime in Russia which are of front-page interest throughout the world, came within the scope of this absorbing conversation.

Finally, as we were approaching the frontier, I asked him to summarize in a word or two his impression of the contrast between Russia and the United States. This is what he said: "You in America have built a civilization which in the building of it has lifted your people to the highest level of existence that humanity has ever known. Yet in spite of its material comforts, it is nevertheless for many of you only existence and not life. Some of you have leisure, but none of you lives leisurely. By contrast, we in Russia are building a new civilization. In the building of this we expect to provide not a com-

fortable existence for a few but eventually life itself for all. We shall have life and shall have it more equitably. You exist strenuously; we shall live leisurely."

Such was his analysis of America and his forecast of Russia. Whether he was correct in the former the reader himself can judge; whether his prophecy of Russia will prove accurate or end in tragic disillusionment only the future can determine.

With this interesting introduction I began my visit to Russia. Although the actual time spent in the land of communism was less than a month, the itinerary extended nearly two thousand miles. As a member of a special party of Americans I shared the informing privilege of numerous interviews with government officials and private citizens. There were frequent opportunities for observing the varied political, economic, social, cultural, and religious aspects of what my fellow traveler called the " new civilization " now emerging in Russia. Many hours were spent in museums and galleries. More interesting than their world-renowned collections of art were the moving streams of peasants,

school children, factory workers, and housewives. In small groups under competent guides they wandered through the museums, absorbing a culture and an appreciation of the beautiful which had not been their heritage under the old Czarist régime. Such motion-picture houses as were visited were amazing in that they featured no demoralizing scenarios such as are nightly served to millions of Americans, but instead educational films of a high order, as entertaining as they were informing. All are part of communism's cultural program for uplifting the masses. One of the most unusual sights was the view from the former Czar's palatial box at the opera house in Leningrad, one of the world's famous opera houses. Before the revolution the aristocracy of Russia came here to hear opera and to display costly raiment and priceless jewels. Now men and women came in humble garments. The proletariat sat in the seats of the vanquished and vanished mighty.

The round of inspection included children's homes, sanitariums, workers' rest homes, libraries with their fabulous trea-

A Beggar in Front of a Church. His features suggest that in other years he may have been a member of the now vanished aristocracy

Convention Hall in Moscow where the International Revolutionary Trade-Union Movement had its sessions. The huge signs are in four languages—French, Russian, English, and German. Each reads, "The International Revolutionary Trade-Union Movement presents to capitalism not peace but a sword"

sures of bibliography, communal houses accommodating hundreds of families as part of the government's program for better housing conditions, government hotels for peasants visiting the cities, and workers' clubs established in what had been the palatial homes of former Russian wealthy families, where now factory employees on vacation enjoy Steinway grand pianos and all the rugs, furnishings, and comforts of an era that is gone.

Several palaces of the Czars were visited. Again the outstanding feature was not the throne of the Czar or the boudoir of the Czarina. Nor was it the imposing row of rooms with their marvelous inlaid floors, each floor made of rare imported wood from some remote area of the world. It was once more the endless throng of personally escorted Russians. To them all this extravagance and lavishness was being interpreted as wealth wrung out of the poverty of the people until the Communist Revolution brought the dawn of Russia's new day.

As an attentive spectator I sat in law courts astonished at the legal code because

it is so different from American justice. For the same crime the law in Russia provides varying penalties depending on the intelligence and therefore the proportionate culpability of the evil-doer. Furthermore, a member of the Communist Party suffers heavier penalties than a non-member because infraction of the law by the former has a treasonable implication. A session in the divorce court brought a revealing insight into the marriage situation in Russia. A man came in and applied for a divorce. It was refused not because he could furnish no good reason but because he had left his factory card at home! A few minutes later a woman entered. Her divorce was granted almost immediately. I timed the entire proceedings by my watch. In less than five minutes and at a cost of less than five dollars she walked out freed from her undesired and possibly undesirable husband. He had not even been present. Nor would he know of her freedom until the postman brought the divorce certificate by mail unless his now former wife informed him. Notwithstanding such easy and inexpensive divorce the registrar

declared that divorces in Russia now totaled only about one-fifth of the marriages.

Trips into the country districts included visits to the homes of peasants or *muzhiks*, and to typical Russian farms, where eighty per cent. of the people work and sweat during the heat of summer and loaf and freeze during the long cold Russian winter. Here primitive individualistic farming was observed exactly as it has been done for thousands of years, and by way of contrast, scientific agriculture on a government cooperative farm or " collective " such as it is planned to establish all over Russia. Factories, too, were inspected, their fourteen-hour day with two shifts of seven hours, and their intense activity evidencing plainly a superhuman effort to lift this enormous mass of people out of its ancient, primitive agricultural lethargy into modern industrialized efficiency.

Opportunity was also afforded for a study of the religious situation. This is indeed a subject of world interest which will soon become a matter of serious import to the spiritual life of mankind as the full significance

of communism's crusade against religion is more adequately appreciated.

Thus a visit to Russia whatever its duration comes to be an experience in communing with communism, a phrase that suggested the title of this book. Such contacts, observations, and experiences confirm the impression conveyed by my fellow traveler that a new social order, a new civilization, is indeed being developed here. In its bold, spectacular effort to reorganize human society so that happiness, leisure, economic security, comfort, and all the material and cultural blessings of life shall not be limited to classes but shall be distributed more equitably among the masses who by their labor produce them, this new civilization presents a definite challenge to the world of capitalism. On the other hand, in its restriction of individual liberty, in its ruthless control of life, in its unswerving determination to uproot religion, in its repudiation of the deeper spiritual longings of humanity, and in its emphasis on only the physical, economic, and cultural needs of life, this new civilization presents a positive menace.

The question will be asked as to whether a traveler on a visit of short duration is able to gather sufficient data on which to form reliable conclusions. That depends on how careful are his observations and to what extent he is able to free himself from political prejudices and economic complexes. It is possible for a discerning traveler on a single visit to a new land to gather many impressions which when assembled together, like the popular pastime puzzle of today, will form a fairly accurate picture. As Mr. Paul Scheffer, the brilliant correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, whom I met in Leningrad, said to an American author, "Only two sorts of people can write about Russia, those who stay for years and give up their lives to the study of this extraordinary country, and those who come in for a very short time and leave before the first vivid impressions become confused." [1]

Another question frequently asked relates to tourist liberty. Is the traveler in Russia free to see what he wants to see or is he under constant surveillance? It is gener-

[1] Quoted from Dorothy Thompson: *The New Russia.*

ally assumed that his movements are restricted and that he is continually under observation. Concerning this an American journalist says: "The isolation of the foreigner has become increasingly stringent in the last eighteen months. The insistence of officials that any Russian may make friends with any foreigner is a useless falsehood. The simple fact is that the one hundred per cent. communist shrinks from the bourgeois representative through a real distaste for contact with anything 'unclean.' The rest especially in the larger centers steer shy out of ordinary fear. It may be legal, they figure, but it is not safe. It is an open secret that all foreigners are under constant surveillance and few Russians, however clear their consciences, care to step into the circle of observation." [2]

This comment was only partially confirmed by my own experience, for I was apparently free to go about wherever and whenever I chose. During the day I was of course constantly in charge of official escorts and interpreters. During the eve-

[2] Eugene Lyons, *The New York Sun*, March 5, 1931.

ning and early morning hours I was independent. Either alone or with a fellow American I wandered long hours and weary miles through congested streets and crowded alleys, pausing here and there to observe how Russia lives through its housing shortage, its food scarcity, and its never vanishing fear of interference with its personal affairs. And when occasionally in some park or secluded alley I found an English-speaking or a German-speaking Russian who was not afraid to talk with a foreigner, I got his point of view and the other side of the picture which the tourist can too readily acquire if his observations are restricted under official government guidance.

It is clear that what takes place in Russia will inevitably be of major concern to the rest of humanity. For Russia is so vast in area, so great in population, so enormous in potentialities, that the success or failure of her stupendous social experiment is bound to affect the entire world. The new civilization emerging is radically different from anything that has ever been seen before. The very sharpness of its contrasts with that

of America brings into clear focus the irreconcilable issues between a communistic and a capitalistic way of life so that even a casual traveler becomes immediately aware of them. Since independence in international relationships is vanishing and interdependence is taking its place, the rest of the world and especially America will be profoundly influenced by what is going on in Russia.

There are inaccordable differences between this new civilization and that of America. The political systems of Russia and the United States are hopelessly at variance. One is a democracy; the other frankly admits that it is a dictatorship. In his King's Mountain address President Hoover said that the American political system was "a revolt against dictatorships whether by individuals or by classes." Communism and capitalism are incompatible and contradictory. So the harmonious adjustment of the economic order of the two countries is impossible without the surrender of principle by one or the other. The cultural programs of the two nations differ materially. The ob-

jective of culture in Russia is to produce communists. The aim of culture in America is to contribute to the well-being of the individual and of society. Certainly the religious ideals of America and Russia are eternally irreconcilable. Atheism and theism are at opposite extremes, and there is here no possibility of blending the black and the white so that the two might merge into a gray.

The development of this new civilization in Russia should therefore be of paramount interest to every American who is at all concerned with international relationships and the future welfare of humanity.

II

TRAVELING IN RUSSIA

FOR an American to visit Russia is not easy. He can go from New York to Hawaii merely by telephoning a ticket-office to reserve accommodations. He can start on a moment's notice and without a passport for Canada, Bermuda, or Mexico. He needs a passport to visit other countries but this Washington now furnishes very promptly and the necessary visas are affixed immediately upon application at the consular offices in New York. It is not so with Russia. Weeks before he plans to leave America he must file in Moscow his application for permission to enter. He must fill out a questionnaire in which he states fully the reasons for his projected visit. Then after long waiting comes a reply cablegram either denying his request or else indicating that a Russian visa will be granted either in London or Berlin since Russia has no diplomatic representative in the United States.

This experience deepens whatever idea he may already have, that Russia is a land of mystery. Such an impression is still further accentuated by the actual crossing of the frontier which is a most interesting experience. " This is Russia," said a fellow American traveler as I stood in the railroad station across the Polish border. There was a wealth of meaning in his utterance. I was standing in line waiting my turn for the customs inspection and registration of valuables. The formidable military demonstration which had accompanied the passing of the train across the frontier, had left a profound impression on my mind. It seemed as if this section of Europe was still in the grip of the war.

For twenty-four hours I had journeyed in a comfortable international sleeping-car from Berlin across Poland to the Russian boundary. At the last station before the actual border was reached a squad of Polish soldiers had boarded the train, armed with rifles and fixed bayonets. Two were assigned to each car, thus controlling both exits. Under this guard the train then pro-

ceeded slowly across a so-called No Man's Land to the frontier, some ten miles farther, marked by a line of boundary posts, a barbed-wire fence, and barracks. Here the soldiers left the train and marched to the barracks. The train now in charge only of the engine crew started again and moved slowly across the line. Just over the actual boundary the Russians had erected a huge steel arch from the top of which a red flag was flying merrily in the breeze. In big letters following the curve of the arch the traveler who could understand Russian read the words, "Russia welcomes the workers from the West." The instant the line was crossed a company of Russian soldiers, their uniforms not quite so snappy as the Polish uniforms but their rifles just as deadly and vicious-looking, boarded the moving train. Again two soldiers were assigned to each car. Under this new escort the train proceeded another stretch of ten miles to the first Russian station. On this short ride a fat, pompous Russian passport officer hurried through the cars and gathered up all passports. Thus I arrived in Russia.

It was a fascinating experience watching the customs examination. Americans were treated most courteously, and the examination of their baggage was only perfunctory. Fortunately I had left all papers and documents back in Paris and was traveling light with only a single large suit-case. Not so the Russians. They were heavily laden with trunks, suit-cases, valises, bundles, bags, boxes, bales, parcels, packages, and baskets of all kinds. All had to be opened for minute inspection. Duties imposed on food supplies, clothing beyond two suits, and other evidences of plutocracy were heavy. It took nearly three hours to clear the baggage of less than fifty passengers. Nothing of a compromising character was found, for Russians and also foreigners have by this time learned how useless and how dangerous it is to attempt to bring into Russia anything that might be regarded as propaganda to undermine communism.

Everybody had to register personal valuables. So I declared how much money I had with me, also my watch, my kodak, and my typewriter. I was told to preserve care-

fully the certificate of registration which had to be surrendered on leaving the country. I was likewise admonished to keep all receipts for foreign money exchanged into Russian currency. No traveler could take out of Russia more wealth than he had brought in.

At one end of the large station examination room was a money exchange bureau, operated by the government as a branch of the Soviet state bank. Here dollars were exchanged into Russian rubles, and a fixed rate of par whereby a dollar becomes one ruble ninety-four kopecs is arbitrarily maintained. Russia allows no exporting of her currency so that it is never quoted on the international exchange markets. Nevertheless a traveler last summer could buy Russian rubles in Berlin for fifteen cents instead of forty-nine cents at the government exchange offices. But a foreigner caught smuggling this "bootleg" currency across the border is heavily penalized, while a Russian so caught is likely to be shot. So it is seldom tried. It was said in Berlin that these rubles sold at fifteen cents were brought from Russia by

Russian refugees who have to accept whatever they can get for their currency. Now and then an adventurous returning traveler brings this currency in, and if the customs inspector fails to discover it, the traveler is able to live fairly cheaply in Russia while it lasts.

While this inspection was going on the Polish train, now empty and with only its Polish engine crew, had been sent back across the border. A Russian train backed in on the other side of the station on the well-known wide-gauge Russian rails. There were two types of coaches. Some were equipped with wooden benches. By lifting up the backs on hinges, they became upper and lower shelves to be used as sleeping bunks at night. The others were the usual type of Russian sleeping-cars with compartments fitted with two or four berths. The train thus had the Russian equivalent of the European first and second class equipment. Naturally I wondered how communism in Russia got around this obvious class distinction, since communism means equality for all. Then I examined the tickets. Passen-

gers in the cars with wooden benches held tickets reading "*For wagons with hard seats*" while passengers in the compartment sleeping-cars held tickets reading "*For wagons with soft seats.*" Thus all social distinctions were avoided. All passengers regardless of what part of the train they were in were regarded as equals. It was only the railroad equipment that differed. There was neither first nor second class; simply hard and soft seats, whichever the passenger really preferred. Class distinction had been done away and seating differentiation had taken its place.

Since I personally preferred to spend the night on a soft seat rather than a hard bench I paid the extra fare and found myself in a compartment with three other men. During dinner in the dining-car the berths were made up. Each berth received one sheet with a thin and somewhat soiled blanket but no pillow. The problem was whether to sleep on the soiled linen cover of the car seat and be covered with a clean sheet or to sleep on a clean sheet and be covered with a soiled blanket. After some serious discussion with

my fellow compartment travelers, all four of us chose the former arrangement.

After placing my baggage in the racks overhead I went to the dining-car at the rear of the train for dinner. To reach that car was a thrilling experience. There were no protected vestibules as in American trains, and the slightest lurch of the train would have thrown a passenger crossing from one car to the next down to the rails below and to certain death if he failed even for an instant to hold grimly to door-knobs and hand-rails as he went along. The diner was already quite full with a cosmopolitan group of passengers, an Englishman interested in a Russian concession, several German technical experts, a few Poles, some Russians returning from a mission on behalf of the Government, an army officer, and a party of Americans. Linen was apparently scarce for there were no napkins. Each diner was furnished a triangular piece of tissue-paper as large as half an American paper napkin. The dinner consisted of cabbage soup (and what Russian menu is ever without its cabbage soup?), fried fish with potatoes, plenty

of cucumbers, coarse sour black bread without butter, fruit compote, and the familiar Russian strong tea served steaming hot in tall glasses. The waiters, judging by their dark colored yet fearfully soiled garments and their filthy dish-cloths stuck in their belts, appeared more like stable-boys than dining-car waiters. I had no desire to peer into the kitchen, for the appearance of the waiters suggested all too plainly what degree of cleanliness might be found there.

The long twilight in this northern latitude delayed retiring for the night. The cool night air, likewise due to the northern latitude, made a steamer-blanket, carried all the way from New York, a warmly appreciated blessing. The early rising sun shining into an uncurtained window shortened still more what little sleep there was. So everybody rose early. There was no commodious wash-room, with hot and cold water, no plenitude of towels (how an American misses his Pullman car when he travels at night in Europe), nothing but a small lavatory with a single tap drawing water from a tank near the ceiling.

So unshaved I started for the diner for breakfast. After a long delay, for what reason no one could explain, this was served with the other half of the paper napkin of the night before. Breakfast consisted of bread, more bread, a slab of cheese, and a slab of pressed fish that resembled caviar, and tea or a drink called coffee which was made of roasted grain.

On returning to my car I found the corridor blocked by the train conductor and the car porter. They were having an extended argument with a foreigner and his wife who were occupying a two-berthed compartment. The man had slept in the upper berth, and on climbing down in the morning he had followed an agelong custom of matrimonial felicity and had affectionately greeted his wife with a good-morning kiss. By one of those unusual travel coincidences, indicating again how truth is always stranger than fiction, at that precise moment the porter had opened the compartment and had been an unannounced and unexpected witness of this manifestation of domestic bliss. The doors to Russian sleeping-cars cannot be locked.

They can only be bolted from the inside sufficiently to prevent any one from coming in but not sufficiently to prevent the conductor or porter from opening the door a few inches to collect tickets and to see what is happening inside. · The porter had seen, and he promptly called the conductor who argued with the passenger until finally but under vigorous protest he paid a fine of 25 rubles for the rash act of kissing his wife. Had the affectionate husband been a Russian the fine would have been doubled.

To an American such a fine seemed both ridiculous and unreasonable. Yet when one understands the Russian point of view it is entirely logical and consistent. Women in Russia under the communist régime are on a basis of absolute equality with men, having equal rights, privileges, opportunities, and equal wages when performing the same tasks. There is no discrimination or separation of sexes when traveling, and it is not at all uncommon for a woman to find herself in the same railroad compartment with one or more men, entire strangers to her. To maintain the dignity of womanhood and

to protect the woman who travels alone the law imposes a penalty on any man guilty of the slightest indiscreet or ungentlemanly conduct. So the porter and the conductor, faithful servants of communism, followed the letter and the spirit of the law and collected the fine. This was the explanation offered for this curious rule which made it a misdemeanor for a man to kiss a woman in a railroad train. Of course the passenger registered a vigorous protest when reaching his destination, and the railroad management promptly refunded his fine with an expression of regret for the annoyance caused him. For even in Soviet Russia it is recognized that a husband has the inalienable privilege of kissing his wife and ought not to be compelled to pay a fine for manifesting such affection.

III

A LAND OF PARADOXES

WHILE in Russia I was three times told a story that is now quite familiar. It was said that an American, greatly puzzled by the conflicting reports about the communist revolution and his difficulty to understand all its political, social, economic, and cultural readjustments, decided to ascertain for himself what was actually taking place. So he came to Russia with one hundred questions. After an extended visit he returned home, only to discover that he now had two hundred questions, not one of which had been answered.

The story is, of course, fiction, yet it typifies a frequent experience. No land on earth today is so full of paradoxes and sharp contrasts, of lights and shadows, of enormous potentialities and possibilities of shattering disillusionments. For example, just what would happen if a bad harvest or a

severe drought should fall upon Russia in the midst of the great Five-Year Industrial Program, which is the outstanding fact in Russia's present economic revolution, and the present food shortage, so painfully evident, should assume famine proportions? Would the long-suffering, patient endurance of this noble and friendly people finally break? Would the present bright enthusiasm and inspiring hope, quite as evident as the food shortage, turn into the blackness of despair? It is dreadful to contemplate such consequences.

One can readily sympathize with the aforementioned American, mythical though he may be, and his questioning bewilderment. Any one who communes with communism even for a brief period will be likely to come out of Russia with more unanswered questions than he had when he went in. As I outline the chapters of this book I am sitting in a comfortable second-class compartment in a slow moving train in Estonia, having just emerged from Russia. The border is but fifty miles away. Woe to the Estonian fishermen who venture too

close to the imaginary boundary-line that crosses the lake! How these Estonians envy the Germans for having a buffer state between them and Russia! They recall so vividly the events of 1924. On my arrival at Tallinn I was shown two memorial tablets on the wall of the railroad station. They remind every incoming and outgoing passenger of the two Estonian officers who were assassinated there when Russian communists attempted by violence to overthrow the Estonian government. So the mind of an American returning from a visit to Russia is filled with a confusing array of conflicting impressions. For Russia is a land of paradoxes, and a paradox is always difficult to reconcile or understand.

Perhaps the first that strikes an American traveler is the paradox of wealthy poverty. Russia is so very rich and yet so very poor. The country has potential wealth, and the people live in actual poverty. Here is a vast country comprising one-sixth of the land surface of the earth with incalculable resources in timber, furs, oil, grain, cotton, and other raw materials so essential to modern

civilization. Here is also a population of 160,000,000 far down in the scale in the economic struggle for existence. How can one reconcile the waving fields of grain, inspiring evidence of nature's generosity, so constantly seen from the train windows, and the long lines of sad-faced women waiting patiently their turn at the bread shops for their daily ration of bread? How can one reconcile factories feverish with activity, evidencing plentiful production, with actual shortage in retail distribution?

One day I visited a rubber factory where rubbers, galoshes, and all kinds of rubber footwear were produced. Its daily output was said to be fifty-five thousand pairs. Three days later from my hotel window at eight o'clock in the morning I gazed across the street where a line of people stretched from the door of a shop clear around the corner of the block. It was eight o'clock, and there were more than two hundred people in line waiting to buy rubbers. The shop did not open until eleven o'clock, and at twelve-thirty everything had been sold, the shop had closed, and more than half the

prospective and now disappointed customers went back home. How can one reduce this paradox of apparent plenty and actual scarcity?

This contrast is also evident in the food served foreign guests at the hotels patronized by foreigners and the prevailing fare offered the Russians. The former are furnished thick slices of pressed caviar and cheese for breakfast, generous portions of palatable soup and of fish for dinner, and usually omelet for supper. The latter fare on greasy cabbage soup, very little meat, and coarse black bread. Yet the abundance offered the foreigner only emphasizes a certain shortage. If he wants real coffee rather than roasted grain for breakfast he must bring it in with him. If he needs the vitamins in orange juice he must bring a supply along, for oranges are not obtainable at all and other fruit very seldom. At one of the leading hotels the first breakfast-table exhibited a large plate filled with apples and pears. It made a favorable and lasting impression, for during the remaining five days it never appeared again. The observing

A Russian Restaurant. Propaganda is much in evidence as indicated by the variety of posters on the walls

American naturally wonders whether this apparent plenitude in the hotels is an attempt to modify the impression left by the scarcity in the street.

Then there is the paradox of undemocratic democracy. It is one thing to read about the Russian alleged democratic political system while thousands of miles away from it, and quite another thing to cross the boundary-line into Russia, surrender one's passport, be left without American protection, for there are no diplomatic representatives of the United States in Russia, and to be unable to leave the country until the Russian government has given its official permission. The people are supposed to have a democratic government, for all men and women over eighteen years of age except members of the former aristocracy, private traders, ministers and priests, and a few other classes are entitled to vote. Each village soviet elects its representative to the district soviet, which in turn elects to the state soviet, and the state elects to the National Congress of Soviets. This is entirely democratic until it comes to making impor-

tant decisions. Then nothing can be done contrary to the established principles and will of the Communist Party. A small group of 1,500,000 communists controls the destiny of 160,000,000 people. Thus we have the extraordinary paradox of democratic government and group dictatorship.

Of absorbing interest because of its curious psychology is another paradox, a disdainful admiration of America. One finds in the same individual a genuine and frankly admitted appreciation of American civilization and an equally frank and open contempt for the political and economic system which has produced it. "We admire your industrial efficiency; we hate your capitalistic system," said a young Russian. It is reasonable to suppose that he voiced the feeling of all faithful members of the Communist Party.

It was extraordinary to find that this feeling could exist without in the least modifying the sincere and at times overwhelming friendliness for Americans as individuals. Nothing could have been more genuine than the friendly feeling manifested by the people toward American visitors. I was one day

visiting a government collective farm. It was the noon hour, and the peasants, now enrolled in this community enterprise, were having their frugal midday meal. A group of boys were fascinated by my watch, my four-bladed knife, and my brilliant blue fountain pen. When I broke two lead pencils into several pieces, sharpened each to a point and distributed them around, the joy of these youngsters was boundless. Soon the peasants themselves gathered around and joined in the merriment. Here was a friendliness and a cordiality as genuine and sincere as can be found anywhere on earth. Nowhere throughout my stay did I meet an unfriendly gesture, or an attitude or a remark against me as an individual American. But there was abundant evidence of an overpowering hatred of the capitalistic system and paradoxically an overwhelming admiration of its industrial efficiency.

There are many other paradoxes. Can there be such a thing as spacious crowdedness? It seems so in Russia, for there is illimitable space, yet indescribable overcrowding in the villages and especially in

cities such as Moscow. More and more workers are being drawn from the big open spaces to the narrow streets and squalid houses of the cities as the big industrial program gathers increasing momentum. One wonders whether factories are not being built more rapidly than houses for the workers who must operate the factories. Sometimes drastic effort is made to solve this paradox. Thus in April, 1929, when the Five-Year Program had just begun, a decree called for the eviction of the non-working element in the population so as to reduce the rapidly increasing overcrowding. This meant in Moscow the immediate expulsion of 10,000 families whose vacated rooms and cubicles were at once filled by the same number of proletarians. The plight of the evicted families can well be imagined.

Then there is an obvious attempt to make inefficiency efficient. Stated appointments are usually late, but trains start on time. They also make high speed to recover lost time. One night on a branch railroad not frequently used by foreigners I had to strap myself to an upper bunk to avoid falling out

as the train plunged along at frightful speed to connect with a train on a main line. It made the connection with *two* minutes to spare, but in the morning I had to sit in the dining-car and wait *ten times two* minutes for a breakfast consisting only of bread, cheese, and tea. The great five-year program of industrial reorganization has revealed costly examples of inefficient efficiency. Thus $5,000,000 was said to have been spent on the construction of an irrigation canal that was to have cost $2,000,000 according to the original estimates. Motor busses in the city suffer frequent breakdowns, for no bus, however well constructed, can long survive the terrific shaking of these endless cobblestone streets.

Another paradox rather difficult to express in a single phrase revealed itself in the elimination of personal greed or of the acquisition of wealth as a life motivation. With the emphasis on the welfare of society as a whole this seems to have largely disappeared. Yet strangely enough a desire for power, as individual communists find themselves in positions of responsibility and

control, is insidiously and unconsciously taking its place. As Reinhold Neibuhr said, "We use the machine for private profit and Russia wants to use it for collective well-being. But to balance the greed of America, there is developing in Russia a lust for power which is appalling to the observer." [1]

Militaristic pacifism or pacifistic militarism is still another paradox. Russian communism is opposed to all international or imperialistic war. There is probably nowhere on earth a more eloquent appeal or more effective propaganda for pacifism than the war exhibit in the Museum of the Revolution in Moscow. Yet withal the Russian army is numerically the largest in Europe, while the striking poster showing a twelve-year-old boy holding a rifle, with his six-year-old sister behind him with the inscription below reading, "Come on, you capitalists, we are ready for you!" suggests that class wars are exempt from all considerations of pacifism.

A rather remarkable paradox appears in the contrast between the American and the

[1] *Christian Century*, September 10, 1930.

Anti-Alcohol Poster, the appeal of the boy, reading, "Papa, do not drink," an indication of a temperance attitude in Russia of special interest at this time in America

Russian methods of dealing with the liquor problem. As indicated by the anti-alcohol posters reproduced on pages 36 and 49, Russia is conducting a publicity campaign against the use of alcoholic beverages. Doubtless this is prompted by a realization that liquor interferes with industrial efficiency and retards economic progress by diverting money into unproductive channels. So the government, which makes the liquor and rigidly controls the traffic, discourages its consumption both by educational propaganda and by making its purchase prohibitively expensive. Thus the government in Russia, a dictatorship rigidly controlling the welfare and destiny of 160,000,000 people, fights alcohol by the methods of democracy, which are persuasion and education. In America the government, a democracy permitting the people to work out their own welfare and destiny, fights alcohol by the methods of dictatorship, which are compulsion and suppression.

And there is, finally, the religious paradox, not so noticeable on the surface, yet plainly evident to an observing foreigner.

Russia is banishing religion, yet communism seems to be slowly but increasingly developing into a new religion for the Russian people. Russia seeks to exterminate religion, yet is apparently unaware that with her crusade against the superstition, the idolatry, and the Czarist control of the old Russian Orthodox Church an intelligent and liberal Christian in America finds himself in hearty accord. Russia seeks deliberately to suppress all Bibles, yet it carefully preserves its rare collection of Gutenberg Bibles and the original Tischendorf manuscript. In my hands I held this, the oldest existing manuscript which all Bibles in use today recognize as their ultimate literary authority. What bitter irony it is that through the fortunes of history the oldest written record of the faith of Christianity should be in possession of an atheistic government. What a paradox this is! With one hand communism in Russia preserves the most valuable treasure of Christianity, its oldest Bible, and with the other hand seeks to suppress the use of Bibles throughout the land. Russia denies the existence of God, yet in worship-

ing the machine in her industrial program Russia is creating a new god. Communism repudiates all religion, yet its own atheistic humanism has the characteristics of a religious fanaticism. Russia denies the divinity of Christ, yet the very terms which it takes away from Jesus Christ it applies to Lenin. In its resolution adopted after the death of Lenin, the Soviet Congress declared, "He was the Lord of the new humanity, the Saviour of the world." [2] The latest biography of Lenin [3] uses the strikingly paradoxical subtitle "God of the Godless."

[2] Gamaliel Bradford, in *Harper's Magazine*, July, 1930.
[3] Ferdinand Ossendowski, *Lenin, God of the Godless.*

IV

IN THE CITADEL OF COMMUNISM

MOSCOW, the capital of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U. S. S. R.), citadel of communism one might call it, presents the extraordinary and bewildering spectacle of a community that, until yesterday, was slumbering in the complacency of civic medievalism and, now, under the driving power of its communistic rulers, is attempting to bridge the intervening centuries and in five short years to transform itself into a modern city.

The process involves terrific turmoil. Probably no other city on earth is in such a state of upheaval. Miles of streets are torn up although repairing proceeds only a block at a time. As a result, enormous stretches are practically impassable as traffic arteries. Does this suggest Russian inability to adopt quickly American efficiency methods, or does it imply communism's

The Cathedral of the Redeemer in Moscow. A congregation of several thousand people gathers here Saturday evenings. Note the street-paving upheaval and the evident attempt to beauify the area around the church

capacity for destruction without a corresponding capacity for construction? Extensive new street-car lines are being laid out. Will not the motor bus rather than the street-car meet the transportation needs of the city of tomorrow? Some of these streets are doubtless having their first paving in a thousand years. Old buildings are being torn down and remodeled while the new government buildings literally cover acres of space. Although temporary scaffolding still surrounded them, they appeared to be models in building construction and convenience.

In addition to all this confusion is the enormous movement of population on the streets and the sidewalks. Yet the two or three dozen automobiles, all that are to be seen in Moscow, rush through these thoroughfares at forty miles an hour. The rights of a pedestrian are not yet recognized. The street-cars are crowded beyond capacity. Indeed, the New York subway corporation might send a few experts to Moscow to study this overcrowding. On their return they could advise the subway how to carry more passengers with fewer cars. One reason for

this street crowding is the five-day week whereby the day of rest is "staggered" so that every twenty-four hours one-fifth of the population has its day of rest. Accordingly every day four-fifths of Moscow goes to work and one-fifth is either going to or coming from a place of recreation. Another reason is the indescribable congestion in homes and apartments. Indeed one might say that under the persistent population pressure every abode is now a tenement-house so crowded as to make it impossible to stay indoors except to sleep. So there are crowds everywhere.

To meet this overwhelming housing shortage, new construction is being undertaken in practically all sections of Moscow. The new communal apartment-houses, with their common kitchens and restaurants, nurseries and playgrounds, libraries and club rooms, and auditoriums seating all residents, are architecturally attractive and thoroughly livable. To be sure the rooms are small and usually only two comprise an apartment. Yet they furnish a measure of family privacy not obtainable in the older houses. On the second

One of Moscow's New Buildings, showing a marked contrast in the prevailing Russian architecture. The new may be more utilitarian but it lacks the artistic beauty of the old

floor of such a new communal house which I inspected in Moscow I found a maternity and birth control instruction museum. Possibly the small apartments had been built in anticipation of the effectiveness of this museum. Each apartment had a radio which was broadcasting either excerpts from "Aida" or a communist oration.

Were it not for this movement of life and this extended building program, Moscow would leave a dismal impression on the visitor, for the city on the whole is indescribably shabby. This is inevitable after sixteen years of poverty and neglect. The need for paint and repairs is overwhelming. When shattered stucco walls are never restored, broken door-hinges never repaired, crashed panes of glass never removed, leaking roofs never mended, the results are all too visible.

One striking feature of life in Moscow and in any Russian community today is the absence of wealth. The uniformity of costume is especially noticeable. Simple house dresses, seldom colorful, are the prevailing street garments of the women. Rarely does a damsel venture forth in silk stockings for

they are obtainable only from private traders at exorbitant prices. The men wear dark suits with, occasionally, white embroidered blouses. A few of the younger men appear in white shirts and collars. Even the government officials wear drab suits. The result is as colorless a picture of human raiment as can be found anywhere on earth. Here in Russia, wealth, if it exists at all, hides and never dreams of exhibiting itself in fine raiment, for that would at once advertise it.

No sojourn in Moscow is complete without at least one visit to the famous "Park for Culture and Rest." It is appropriately named. Not only does it cater to the usual demand for amusement but it also meets a real need in providing an opportunity for rest and for culture. Located just outside of Moscow on the river front it occupies a tract of land fully two miles long and almost a mile wide.

Here on a summer evening I found nearly 100,000 people of all ages. The river furnished unlimited and ideal opportunities for bathing and boating. The woods offered

restful shelter from the noon-day sun. Acres and acres of tennis-courts and volley-ball courts swarmed with the athletic youth of Moscow. A huge circus occupied one corner of the park, a motion-picture theater another, while museums and exhibit halls featuring again the Five-Year Program filled in the intervening spaces. Thousands of benches furnished resting-places for those multitudes of people who find their chief recreation in watching the moving panorama of similar multitudes pass by. An immense outdoor restaurant surrounded the band stand where an orchestra played continuously. Surprising as it may seem, there were no dancing pavilions. Instead, the park had a dozen or more plots set apart where groups of one hundred young people in circular formation and with an accordion player and an instructor in the center were being taught Russian folk-dancing.

One building was assigned to chess-players, and I counted twenty-seven chess-boards, meaning that fifty-four young men and women were spending the evening in this absorbing pastime. Could such a thing

ever happen at Coney Island? Quite a "gallery" surrounded the table where a brilliant Chinese player and an equally expert Russian had developed an interesting situation.

Of fascinating interest was a nursery in a remote section of the park and having its own buildings and playground. Here mothers "parked" their children for the day. Graded as to age and under competent instructors and nurses to look after them, these children were amused and cared for while their mothers took a holiday.

Communism begins early in Russia for there were no "individual" toys for these children with which they might cultivate their individualistic and hence selfish or capitalistic tastes. Instead they had large mechanical or vehicular toys which six or more children had to operate or play with together, thereby developing a group consciousness. Thus even the infants in Russia are being taught the principles of communism.

This huge park is maintained and operated by the municipality of Moscow. Each one of the 100,000 amusement and culture

seekers pays only ten kopecs (five cents) admission fee. So well behaved and orderly was the crowd that there were only two policemen in the entire park. Naturally I wondered how Coney Island would behave on a summer evening if all but two of its police force were withdrawn.

The one object most frequently seen in Moscow, and probably throughout Russia, is the picture of Lenin. One finds it literally everywhere, in government offices, school buildings, hospital corridors, the opera house and moving-picture theaters, shop windows, factory offices and workrooms, workers' clubs and in individual homes. One might almost say that at every turn of the road the traveler is greeted by the countenance of Vladimir Lenin. Far out in a country village and in the home of a poor, illiterate peasant, I found a picture of Lenin on the wall of the front room. The old *ikon* that had hung there for many years had been relegated to an obscure place in the bedroom where it was worshiped now only by the peasant's wife. It is not surprising therefore to read that the Soviet

Congress also declared in the resolution previously referred to, "His wisdom was colossal, his intelligence in organizing the masses was beyond belief. He was the greatest leader of all countries, of all time, and of all people."

Equally noticeable was the brilliantly colored picture poster. Through this advertising method, far more effective than the huge American billboard in that the poster can be more widely distributed, the government promotes every conceivable part of its economic and cultural program, its educational policy, political objectives, religious extermination, and industrial reconstruction. One can think only of the American Liberty Loan campaign during the war and its extensive use of posters as comparable to this widespread poster campaign in Russia. Primitive agricultural methods are ridiculed and modern factory machinery extolled. Religion is scorned and God blasphemed while atheism is propagated. Patience with the food shortage is urged and glittering promises about the results of the vast industrial program are appealingly set forth. Alcoholism

Another Anti-Alcohol Poster. Its message says that a man who drinks has a starving family at home

is condemned and temperance advocated. Reference has already been made to the use of posters in the campaign against the consumption of alcohol. Naturally I wondered if the liquor situation in America would have become such a crucial issue if similar methods had been utilized by supporters of the prohibition amendment.

The poster campaign and the influence of Lenin, who, being dead, yet speaks to the Russian people, explain another noticeable phase of life, especially in Moscow—the deep, apparently boundless, popular enthusiasm. There seems to be a buoyancy in the air that lifts people out of their obvious poverty and discomfort and turns their attention to the future with its promise. Conversations with individual Russians who could speak English or German and interviews with government officials confirm this significant impression. Communism willingly submits to present economic hardships on the simple principle that the present generation must suffer for the sake of future prosperity. Nothing was more evident than the sublime readiness on the part of young

Russians to forego comforts and even necessities in order that the future of their country might be assured. The government explanation for the shortage of bread receives ready acquiescence. Grain must be exported in order to finance the importing of machinery with which to reconstruct Russia's industrial life. Otherwise money must be borrowed from capitalistic nations, a step repugnant to communism and to a people waging a war of economic independence. So the people, propagandized by a poster campaign and with boundless faith in Lenin, are keyed up to a high enthusiasm as they sacrifice today for the tomorrow that they hope will bring the abundance they so sorely lack —a truly sublime example of national self-sacrifice so that future generations may prosper.

V

THE DICTATORSHIP OF A MINORITY

THE first day in Moscow revealed a peculiar currency phenomenon. It seemed impossible to receive small silver coinage in exchange for the paper currency known as the ruble. There are one hundred kopecs to a ruble. The shopkeeper handling souvenir post-cards could sell fifteen cards for a ruble but could not sell less than fifteen because there was no change. Postage stamps could not be bought unless a full ruble's worth were taken. A refreshment stand around the corner from the hotel would sell three bottles of mineral water for a ruble but could not sell one or two bottles. On the street-car the passenger either had to buy ten tickets for a ruble or walk. Even in department stores, operated by the government, change was so scarce that the cashiers were giving out little pieces of paper

marked 10 kopecs which were accepted in trade in other departments of the store. Out in the country 70 kopecs of silver would actually buy as much as could be bought with a paper ruble. Clearly there was a mysterious shortage of silver currency.

It was apparent that people were losing confidence in the value of their paper money, were fearing another era of inflation, and thus began hoarding silver currency because this had an intrinsic value as metal. There may be some ground for this fear of inflation. The government arbitrarily maintains a rate of exchange of about two rubles for a dollar, and all foreigners must convert their money at this rate. Yet rubles can be bought outside Russia at substantially less than the government rate, but no one is allowed to bring them in. Smuggling rubles into Russia is a serious crime. Again the high prices for everything suggest the possibility of currency inflation.

On the other hand hoarding, because of years of shortage of food and goods, has almost become a national trait. Although det-

rimental to society it does give a feeling of individual security.

Apparently the government realized that the situation was becoming critical and that something had to be done. So the secret police, known all over Russia as the G. P. U., stretched out its net and caught four men in Moscow. One man was a clerk, another a cashier, the third a factory foreman, and the fourth a private trader. All four were reported to have hoarded several thousand rubles' worth of silver currency. All four faced a firing-squad and thus departed from the sight of men. The facts were published in the Russian papers. This method of dealing with a fiscal emergency may be severe and gruesome; but it is logical and efficient. These men were helping to undermine public confidence, and they paid the penalty. The effect in Moscow seemed to be instantaneous. That same afternoon change seemed plentiful. Yesterday the shopkeeper from whom I bought some posters had no change. Today he appeared glad to get rid of what now seemed an unusually large amount of change for him to have in his possession. More

than a modest amount was now a dangerous possession, an embarrassing liability, instead of a desirable asset.

That evening I was at a club. Beside me at the supper-table sat a young Russian, a university student of possibly twenty years of age. He spoke English fairly fluently. He was flaming in his condemnation of the silver hoarders; enthusiastic in approval of their executions. "Of course shooting them was justifiable," said he. "They were individualists disregarding the welfare of the people; they were capitalists fighting the establishment of communism; they were traitors undermining the financial stability of the nation."

This incident given in some detail reveals not only the communist mind but also the absolute control of the present government in Russia. Such an occurrence coming soon after an American's arrival registers a profound impression of communist power. It is one thing to read in America four thousand miles away of the communistic system of directing all Russian life; it is quite another thing to visit Russia and sense its rigid

General view of Moscow, showing the famous Kremlin surrounded by its medieval wall. This is now the seat of government of Soviet Russia. Within the Kremlin are the government buildings, museums, palaces, and the three czarist churches which were used respectively for the christening, the coronation, and the funeral ceremonies of the royal family

control, its intolerance of opposition, its frank condoning of violence for the attainment of its objectives.

Of course it was freely, frankly, and frequently admitted that legal and educational methods for the overthrow of capitalism and its governments and for the maintenance of communism are preferable; but it was also freely affirmed that these methods are not adequate or sufficient without a steady persistent pressure from below and violence from above. An argument several times offered was to the effect that the World War, as waged by capitalistic nations, cost more human lives than all political revolutions in history. Yet no nation had protested. Why then protest now when the communist program involves occasional and unintentional violence if thereby its alleged noble objective is achieved?

So an American coming here for the first time is overwhelmed by this system. It is inconceivable yet true that in Russia, a country comprising more than one-sixth of the land surface of the earth and inhabited by a cosmopolitan people, complete, dictatorial

political control should be in the hands of a small but powerful minority known as the Communist Party. It is reported to have a membership of only 1,500,000 and a nominal membership of possibly 500,000 more, who are candidates on probation. They constitute the only political party in Russia for the simple yet effective reason that no other is permitted to exist. A man is either a Party man or he is not. Qualifications for membership in the Party are very high. The candidate must be a worker or a laborer. He must go through a period of political education in the principles of communism. His district must vote on his candidacy. He must be recommended by at least three members who themselves have been in the Party at least five years. This means that a new member when admitted cannot recommend a candidate until five years have elapsed. Finally he serves on probation for a period of two years.

With such restrictions the numerical growth of the Party remains slow. At the same time its homogeneity and its political strength steadily increase.

To the credit of the Party members it must be said that they show a marvelous fidelity, a willingness to undertake laborious social service tasks, to forego financial rewards, to share privations and to subject themselves to periodic review of their loyalty.[1] Nevertheless the system is so constructed as constantly to maintain power in the hands of a few men.

This party numbering barely more than one per cent. of the population controls the political, economic, social, cultural and religious life of the remaining ninety-nine per cent. The whole system is called " The Dictatorship of the Proletariat," by which is meant that since the Revolution in 1917 the proletariat or workers are now the privileged class as over against the aristocracy before the war who are now practically extinguished. Even this term is somewhat mis-

[1] According to Associated Press reports in the *New York Herald-Tribune,* April 23, 1931, during the recent " cleansing " process 156,916 party members received reprimands for " such misdemeanors as drinking in public places, and laxity in observing party discipline," while 99,610 were expelled from the party on a variety of charges which included " embezzlement, lavish living, belief in religion, and failure to disclose that relatives were traders, priests, or army officers under the old régime." The total membership of the party is now listed as 2,040,655, comprising 67% workers, 22% peasants, and 11% professional men and women.

leading for only about ten per cent. of the people are engaged in industrial labor. The peasantry numbers nearly eighty per cent. of the population. They live on small farms which are worked individually or by members of their families. So the government is making strenuous efforts to communize the farmers through the establishment of cooperative or collective farms. This has a threefold object—improving the condition of the peasant, increasing agricultural production, and welding the peasantry into an easily controlled agricultural proletariat.

How this political control is maintained is exceedingly interesting. Open rebellion is impossible because it depends on leadership and any promising leaders not in sympathy with the government are quickly removed. The peasants are not organized. They lack energy and are widely scattered. Occasionally, however, and in isolated districts they sullenly resist the government's power even to the extent of murdering its representatives. The real strength of the Communist Party is in the trade-unions which give it strong support. Although factory workers

GENERAL VIEW OF LENINGRAD, FORMER CAPITAL OF RUSSIA

It has had three names within fifteen years, St. Petersburg, then Petrograd, and now named after Vladimir Lenin, the revolutionary leader of Soviet Russia. The view shows government buildings with the tower on the Admiralty Building and in the background St. Isaac's Cathedral, one of the five largest in the world.

sometimes as individuals complain of their hardships and scarcity of food, as a group they cooperate because they are aware that in times of actual shortage they will receive first consideration. Thus all administration, military, naval, transportation, educational, manufacturing, and banking activities and already thirty per cent. of agricultural production, and all merchandising except a steadily diminishing private trading, is operated by the government which is controlled by the Party. This requires a personnel of perhaps ten million people who obviously must be loyal to the principles and policies of the Party.

There is an unusual fear of the police system, which is well organized and mysterious in its activities. Stories of midnight arrests, of secret trials, of families left ignorant of the fate of their arrested members, of exile and of prisons crowded with political offenders are quite current. It was reported that there are today 200,000 political prisoners throughout Russia, charged with counter revolutionary activity and that in one important district eighty political of-

fenders had been shot last year. It was explained that such severe methods of dealing with political offenders are necessary to achieve the objectives of communism. When absolute control is assured, a more liberal policy toward political opponents will be allowed.

Fear of the police is doubtless a survival from Czarist days. It has been so deeply implanted in popular imagination that law and order seem universal. It was claimed that Russia has less crime today than any other civilized nation on earth. Under certain conditions the very presence of the police seems not even necessary, as at the "Park for Culture and Rest" in Moscow, described in a preceding chapter, where the immense crowd was almost automatically so orderly and well behaved that only two policemen were on duty to preserve order.

Late one evening after long wandering through the streets of Leningrad I passed the entrance to a hotel. Two Russian youths were having an argument. They became quite disorderly, and a resort to blows seemed imminent. I joined the crowd of

spectators which had gathered, while the hotel porter in vain ordered the youths to move on and settle their argument elsewhere than in front of the hotel. Finally when they continued to pay no attention to his request he drew from his pocket an ordinary whistle which he blew twice. It sounded much like an American police whistle. The effect was as startling as it was instantaneous. The crowd vanished at once and as for the two youths, even Thurston, the magician, with all his mechanical stage equipment could not have made two people disappear more quickly or spectacularly. Such appears to be the fear of the police in Russia!

There is an element of irony in this severe effort to curb all political opposition. One day a visit was made to the Island of Peter and Paul, a part of Leningrad, and I was escorted through its famous old prison. Fortunately it is no longer used. Its damp, smelly dungeons with their iron-slatted beds, cold stone floors, their tiny windows heavily barred, and the statement that prisoners spent the winter in these cells without heat,

sent shivers down my spine. With solemn pride the communist guide pointed out the cell where Lenin's brother had been confined before his execution by the Czarist government. Numerous groups of Russian laborers, peasants, students, and women were also being escorted through this old prison. Each guide most vigorously denounced the prison as a relic of those barbarous Czarist days from which the communist revolution had saved the Russian people. I longed to ask my guide how this prison of yesterday differed from the prison of today maintained on an island, where according to report, isolated, vermin-eaten, half-frozen, the political prisoners eke out an existence of slow starvation in darkness and solitude until death brings release. But I refrained from asking the embarrassing question.

However, when another Russian on another occasion was explaining the legal code of Russia, the humane attitude toward criminals, the policy of reformation rather than punishment, and the adjustment of penalty to the intelligence of the wrong-doer, I did venture to ask about this famous prison. He

replied that the prisoners had full freedom of the island and thus had wide liberty although they were locked in their cells at night. If the food was poor this was not due to intentional maltreatment but to the shortage of food all over Russia since Russia was on short rations. If a factory worker was on short rations obviously a prison inmate must also be on shorter rations. And again if there was darkness and cold it was due to the severe winter climate over which communism obviously had no control! The government was as humane as it could be under the circumstances!

However, one must not judge too hastily concerning the severe treatment of political offenders. Did not all nations in the war do likewise to men who were bold enough to denounce the war and refuse to participate in it? But, it is claimed, such treatment in time of war is necessary for national preservation. This is Russia's point of view at the present time. Russia is fighting a war, not in a military sense but in an economic sense, against the capitalistic world for the establishment of a new system of society in

which wealth, leisure, and the means of happiness shall not be confined to a small class but shall be fairly distributed among all the people. All who differ or disagree or oppose the policy must be rigorously dealt with, as in time of armed conflict.

While one can sympathize with the objective one could wish for a less severe method in its realization. Yet this is doubtless impossible. Whenever and wherever human society is organized so that one per cent. of the population control the other ninety-nine per cent., dictatorship and the methods of terror are essential. One wonders therefore whether the Russian people will some day discover that in abolishing Czarism they have merely established " Czarsism " in its place.

VI

DEPRIVATION AND EXPECTATION

SOME weeks after my return from Russia, newspaper dispatches reported the execution of forty-eight members of a secret counter-revolutionary society who were found guilty of disrupting the rationing of food supplies, and of attempting to starve the Russian population by destroying the food reserve of the country. These forty-eight victims of the firing-squad had been tried, not before a court of justice but before the secret police tribunal. They included former noblemen, former Czarist officers, manufacturers, and property-owners.

Two inferences may be drawn from this reported wholesale infliction of the death penalty. It confirms the reference previously made to the dictatorship of the minority and the power of the dreaded secret police known as the G. P. U. It likewise reveals the acute seriousness confronting Russia in the eco-

nomic situation. When death is the penalty for an attempt to interfere with food rationing, the conclusion is inevitable. Food must be dangerously scarce if any dislocation of the rationing system is likely to result in actual starvation.

The economic situation in Russia, at first glance, is most confusing. On the one side the visitor sees the all too evident signs of poverty—shops with shelves and windows bare of goods, crowds of poorly clad people with their strikingly colorless garments, the extremely few automobiles, the prohibitively high prices for everything that can still be obtained at the private shops, the total absence of such things as coffee and oranges, always abundantly available everywhere in America and now even in Poland and the Baltic States, the shabby houses and buildings so sadly in need of paint and repairs, and, most evident of all, the long lines of patient, sorrowful, wearied women awaiting their turn in front of the food stores. All these scenes cumulatively tell such a story of deprivation that if an American saw nothing else and came away after but a few days'

visit, he would imagine that Russia was in danger of economic dissolution. Personal experiences and contacts with the people also reveal that there is actual want. Although the usual tour of inspection made by foreign visitors under competent official government guides reveals much that is truly commendable and inspiring in the enterprises and institutions which communism is establishing for the people, glimpses beneath the surface and independent information as to how they live and what they have to eat leads to another conclusion. To be sure, at the best hotels there was an abundance of food. But these were government owned and operated hotels, and one could not escape the conclusion, especially when viewing the bread lines and the meagerly menued Russian restaurants, that this abundance was to be had only in these hotels, while the Russian people themselves were on rations.

One day a telegram was received from a city a thousand miles away reporting that an American who was making a special study of conditions in Russia had been taken to a hospital critically ill with pneumonia.

The telegram appealed for oranges and lemons, so necessary in such an illness. Hastily a supply was gathered from such Americans in the hotel as had brought a modest quantity into Russia in their baggage. This was promptly dispatched to the American in such dire distress. A few days later came the sad news that he had passed away. Doubtless owing to the distance to be covered the shipment of fruit never reached him. I mention this incident not alone to evoke sympathy for a distinguished American leader in education who died thousands of miles away, a stranger in a strange land, but to show that, at the time of my visit, even in an emergency involving life and death, certain essential foods were not obtainable in Russia.

The long queues of people standing for hours in line awaiting their turn in the food shops evidence not alone scarcity of supplies. They reveal also a lack of coordination between food production and retail distribution. These queues were such characteristic sidewalk phenomena and were seen so frequently and so regularly that they soon came

A familiar sight in a Russian city, people standing in line waiting their turn in the food shops. The agricultural and industrial program promises early relief of the present food shortage

to be regarded as nothing unusual. I have often thought, nevertheless, of the hardship of such people standing in line in the zero weather of a Russian winter.

This daily standing in line for the necessities of life consumes so much time that a new vocation is springing up in Russia. People whose time is valuable are compelled to hire other people to do their daily marketing. I heard of one case, a woman doctor, who found that a two-hour wait at a bread shop, two more at a vegetable store, and two hours at a meat market so seriously interfered with her medical practise that she now employs another woman to stand six hours in line for these daily food necessities. One wonders why the government does not place several additional shopkeepers behind the counters and thus substantially reduce the time required in daily marketing.

Late one afternoon I visited one of the bread shops. A long queue of women, shabbily clothed, with hardly an expression of joy or happiness on their faces, stretched out of the door clear around the corner. An abundance of loaves of the familiar black

bread on the shelves behind the counter in the shop suggested that there was no real scarcity. However, the meticulous care taken in weighing it so that no customer received more than the ration card called for, indicated that there was just enough to go around and no more. With profound interest I watched the shopkeeper weigh out the bread. A woman presented her card, which called for a certain number of ounces. In the scales he placed a full loaf and half of another loaf which he had cut in two with a huge knife. It was not quite enough, so he cut an additional slice from the half loaf on the counter and placed that in the scales. This made slightly too much. The slice was removed, cut in half, and one-half placed on the scales. Again the total did not register accurately, so he cut the remaining half slice in two, and this additional quarter slice balanced the scales. The other quarter slice was laid aside to balance the scales for some other customer. When bread must be rationed with such scientific mathematical precision, it is irrefutable evidence of food shortage.

The prices charged for food and other commodities that can still be purchased from private traders also reveal the acute shortage of everything essential for comfort and well-being. Such prices also suggest currency inflation. To supplement my diminishing supply of oranges purchased in Berlin, I bought apples from a street vendor at 15 cents per apple. I found butter selling at $2.00 per pound, plums at 7½ cents each, tomatoes at 15 cents each, and eggs at $1.80 per dozen. These prices are all computed on the government exchange rate of approximately two rubles to the dollar. In a men's clothing shop a few overcoats were to be had, far inferior in quality and style to those which a bargain-hunter can occasionally find for perhaps $20 in an American department store basement. Here they were selling for 105 rubles or $52.50 per overcoat. Candy that one could buy at Woolworth's at ten cents was being sold for 50 cents. In the Moscow Park for Culture and Rest, an ice-cream sandwich, of poor quality and one-half the size of the same article costing 5 cents in America, was sold for 10 cents. At

least one had to admit that ice-cream was available! Silk stockings were very scarce and the few that could be secured from private traders seemed to be seventy-five per cent. cotton and twenty-five per cent. artificial silk. They were retailing at $2.50 per pair. The same article could easily be bought in America for 50 cents a pair.

No single experience revealed more keenly the depth of economic distress in Russia than the following incident: One evening I met a distinguished-looking, cultured Russian. His thin features, his obviously cheap and threadbare clothes, although carefully brushed, could not disguise the fact that he had seen better days. How he longed to get out of Russia! Yet on wages of $55 a month and a family to support, and with Russian passports costing $100, a change of address was for him forever impossible. He spoke Russian, German, and a little English. Learning that I was an American, he confided to me that for ten years he had secreted several small but valuable paintings (*gemälde* was the German word he used) hoping some day to sell them and thereby

assure himself and his family of a supplement to his meager financial resources. Could I not take these paintings with me, get them out of Russia in my own baggage, sell them in New York, and then send the proceeds back to him? The suggestion was as astounding as it was revealing. This Russian in his poverty was willing to trust me, a stranger whom he had never seen before and whom he would never see again, with some secreted treasures of art in the hope that I might be the means of helping him in his dire need. Could there be more conclusive evidence of economic distress? With sincere sadness I declined his request, which obviously could never have been carried through, irrespective of any ethical considerations which would be involved.

The question may be asked as to how the economic situation of today compares with that of pre-Revolution times. This is difficult to answer except by those who were in Russia before the Revolution and who have likewise made extended visits here in recent times. Nevertheless it seems clear, and it was several times admitted, that in the coun-

try the peasant today fares better than he did fifteen years ago. Before the Revolution most of his eggs, butter, and cheese were brought to the cities and sold, whereas now he consumes much of these himself, the reasons being dissatisfaction with government prices and inability to purchase manufactured articles with funds received for his produce. So the cities feel the scarcity. As to the proletariat in the city and the aristocracy, of whom very few are left, a shrewd foreign observer commented in this fashion: In Czarist days it might have been said that the aristocrat had two pounds of butter while the proletariat had half a pound. Today the proletariat has one-quarter of a pound while the aristocrat has none at all. The proletariat is thus economically in a better position than the former aristocrat. One wonders, therefore, whether communism, in abolishing individual wealth, has, up to the present time at least, simply distributed poverty over a larger number.

Under these circumstances it seems pathetic yet inspiring to note the popular enthusiasm over the present Five-Year Indus-

trial Program, which will be reviewed in the following chapter. Nothing has so caught the imagination of the people as this alluring prospect of better times, five years hence. The Program is projected under a tremendous, well-organized, and psychologically constructed publicity campaign. In addition to the innumerable and omnipresent posters already mentioned, moving-picture programs, newspaper and magazine articles, radio broadcasting, factory lectures, all are mobilized to promote this ambitious industrial reorganization of Russia. It is nothing less than a bold, brilliant, masterly effort to accomplish in five years what in America has taken place during the past fifty years.

While in Germany I chanced to meet a Russian who had been traveling for several months on a mission for the government. With pride, he showed me a photograph of his family. Then, with deep concern, he spoke of recent letters from his wife, the food shortage, which she described, and her inability to get sufficient nourishing food for the growing children. I do not know whether this Russian, really a representative of the

government, was violating confidence in thus speaking to me frankly of the economic situation. On the other hand, not even the food shortage in his own family could weaken his sublime faith in the future of Russia and his unbounded enthusiasm in the certain success of the vast Five-Year Program of Industrialism now under way. Here was a father prepared to accept the sacrifice of luxuries and necessities of today in order that Russia might build machines and reorganize her economic life so that his children might have necessities and luxuries tomorrow.

Economic deprivation could more easily and more cheerfully be borne by such alluring economic expectation.

VII

A WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

IN RUSSIA today the absorbing topic of conversation and a subject of constant emphasis in government propaganda is the now widely advertised program of industrial reorganization. It is the crux of the entire communist experiment. The government probably realizes far more keenly than the man in the street that the success or failure of communism in Russia depends on meeting the present economic crisis, on replenishing the terrific shortage of goods caused by the World War, and on bringing about more effective coordination between the food-consuming cities and the food-producing rural districts. It was several times positively declared that the Communist Party is now so concerned with this economic situation as to have no time for even a passing interest in communist agitation in other parts of the world. This is obviously contrary to what

has been frequently alleged in America and in other lands.

In launching this gigantic program, the government probably took three inescapable facts into consideration.

One was the steady increase in population. The population of today is already large. Yet the conservatively estimated annual increase of 2.3 per cent. anticipates 200,000,000 people in Russia within another ten years. This means 40,000,000 more to feed, clothe, shelter, industrialize, educate, and propagandize in the interests of communism. There has been a steady decline in the birth-rate, from 45.3 per thousand before the war, to 42.9 at present, but the death-rate has declined much faster, the rate now being 20.7 per thousand, as against 28.6. This is most astonishing when one recalls the terrific upheaval of the past ten years, with its high mortality through war, starvation, and other causes.

The second fact was the realization that, in industrial development, Russia, even before the war, was far behind other countries. When the war ended, the land was left al-

most prostrate. Indeed, it is doubtful whether any other nation suffered more cruelly, more grievously from the after-effects of the world cataclysm. Recovery has been fearfully slow and the marvel is that even a spark of economic vitality remained. How slow the recovery has been is seen from the estimate of foreign trade for 1930, which was put at eighty per cent. of what it was in 1913. Thus the government was faced with the overwhelming necessity of something more revolutionary and immediate than the normal slow process of economic recovery.

The third fact was a growing, insistent, imperative demand to become economically independent of the capitalist nations. Russia is waging a war of independence. To do this successfully requires a reconstruction of the entire industrial and agricultural life of the country, so that Russia might become a self-supporting nation, dependent on outside nations neither for raw materials nor for finished products.

So the foreigner coming to Russia today finds himself in a turmoil of economic read-

justment. The whole nation is being lifted out of centuries of primitive existence into a highly organized industrialized society. The Program is technically known as the G. O. S. plan, which means State Planning Commission, the general staff of the government's industrial reorganization. It began with a plan for the electrification of Russia and it now embraces every phase of industry and agriculture. Like a general staff in an army that makes long future plans of military operations, so this State Planning Commission estimates what the Russian people will need in five, ten, and even fifty years, and plans how the needs are to be supplied. It means scientific economics on a vast national scale.

In popular imagination, it is known as the Five-Year Program. There is nothing in Russia with which the individual has been made more familiar. It is barely possible that its immense publicity has been somewhat overdone. At times, as I walked through museums, palaces, government offices, factories, club rooms, and parks, and saw the crowds of Russians gazing at the

A typical poster issued as publicity for the Five-Year Program. It contrasts primitive agricultural conditions with those promised by the Soviet Government through the establishment of cooperative farms and the mechanization of agriculture

ever-present posters, I wondered whether there was not the faintest trace of a skeptical smile on their countenances as they read the alluring promises of tomorrow and compared them with the disheartening realities of today. Nevertheless popular interest whether artificially stimulated or genuinely experienced seemed wide-spread and enthusiastic.

A five-year epoch is not new in recent Russian history. There have been two five-year periods since the revolution. The first lasted from 1918 to 1923, a period of war communism and economic destruction. The second came in 1923, when the new economic policy, or N. E. P., was established, permitting the reestablishment of private trading. The government realized that it could not immediately assume control of all the nation's economic life. Now comes the constructive period of 1928 to 1933. The new Program functions as a unit through eight well-organized and clearly differentiated departments: (1) electrification; (2) light industries; (3) heavy industries, such as iron, steel, and coal; (4) machine building; (5)

new industries, such as chemical and optical industries; (6) department of research and prospecting; (7) efficiency and labor-saving department; (8) rational geographic distribution. The last is most significant, for the country is divided into economic districts, and all new factories are being built near the sources of raw materials. There will be no such economic developments as in the United States, where cotton is grown in the South, whereas the textile mills were all established in the North.

This ambitious Program calls for a capital investment of 60,000,000,000 rubles, a truly prodigious sum. It includes nearly 20,000,000,000 for industry, 25,000,000,000 for agriculture, and the remainder for transportation, electrification, and residential construction. Most striking was a huge and elaborate industrial map, on sale in the poster shops, illustrating the Program objectives. By the use of colored dots, circles, squares, and other signs, all the completed and projected plants are located, and the entire map evidences amazing industrial planning. If all that it so graphically por-

trays is realized, the industrial reorganization of Russia will be one of the marvels of this century. Of course there are many mistakes, serious errors of judgment, incorrect estimates, and costly blunders. Quality is often sacrificed to maintain statistical quantity. The plan moves at times unevenly so that delay in one department holds up all the rest.

Nevertheless it is optimistically estimated that in five years production will be sufficient to satisfy the needs of the people, while in ten years it is hoped to equal the industrial output of the United States. This may rightly be regarded with some skepticism, for it seems incredible that any nation, with the racial, historic, economic, and temperamental background of Russia, could achieve in ten years what was accomplished during fifty years of American development. Although one nation may readily profit by avoiding the mistakes of another nation, it is sufficiently obvious that half a century of disciplinary experience cannot be repeated in five years.

Nevertheless, some truly wonderful re-

sults will be recorded. Already nearly half of the capital investment has been made, a staggering undertaking, for it means saving half the national income. Never in history has there been so vast an accumulation and redistribution of national wealth. As concrete results might be mentioned the fact that 50 new industrial plants were completed in 1929 and 221 more were assured of completion in 1930. The total value of products for the year 1930 reached the high figure of 16,884,000,000 rubles, an increase of twenty-three per cent. over 1929.[1]

The opening of the new Turkestan-Siberian railroad is a notable example of what can be, and has already been, accomplished. More than 1,700 miles long, it links Central Asia to European Russia, and is the most ambitious undertaking since the communists came into power. Two lengthy motion-picture films, which I witnessed in a Moscow theater, photographically set forth the construction of this new railroad, from the preliminary survey to the welcoming hordes at the stations when the first train came

[1] *New York Times*, February 24, 1931.

through. The feat might well be compared with the opening of an American transcontinental railroad fifty years ago. The United States is already financially aware of the commercial significance of this Russian achievement. American exports of cotton to Russia last year declined $20,000,000, because the new road has opened the cotton areas of Turkestan. So Russia hopes eventually to become independent of both Egypt and the United States for its cotton supply. Turkestan cotton is now also competing with American cotton in the English market. A more picturesque aspect of the new railroad is that it furnishes modern transportation to a part of the world heretofore entirely dependent on camel caravans. Thus Central Asia is brought into touch with both the Far East and Western Europe.

A visit to Russia speedily impresses the tourist that a gigantic industrial upheaval is under way. Since the abolition of Sunday, the factories operate thirty days each month, on a five-day week, so arranged that only one-fifth of the operatives have their rest-day together. With such a "staggered"

rest-day the factories never shut down. In a big steel mill which I visited near Leningrad, where again Lenin's picture was everywhere, there were more than 23,000 employees, of whom twenty-five per cent. were women. The workers were on two shifts of seven hours each and in the great factory dining-room provision was made daily for furnishing 10,000 people with their noon-day meal. The plant makes heavy and light machinery, tractors, harvesting equipment, and locomotives. The train on which I reached Leningrad was drawn by a superior type of modern oil-burning locomotive. The chief emphasis at this steel mill is now the production of tractors, and the aim is to produce 12,000 tractors a year. For a long time I watched the fascinating spectacle of heating the iron until it became a mass of fiery liquidity, pouring it into the moulds, which then started on their journey through the plant to appear days later as tractors.

Another factory, still in process of construction, was planned for the manufacture of watches, an inconceivably scarce article in Russia. A corps of twenty Swiss watch

experts was on hand, and it was hoped to begin production in the fall. Its aim is a daily output of 1,000 watches, which are to retail at 20 rubles or $10. The factory is to have three hundred employees and the Swiss experts will remain as instructors.

In the rubber factory mentioned in the third chapter, a force of 7,000 workers was employed, again on two seven-hour shifts. In the vicinity the government had erected a row of apartment houses in which a factory worker could get a two or three-room apartment for 19 rubles, or $9.50 a month. A park for culture and rest was being laid out, the community nursery already functioning, while a large new community theater was rapidly nearing completion. The force seemed equally divided between men and women, who received equal pay for the same work.

Two great surprises were in store for me here. One was the discovery that, in some departments in this rubber factory, wages were on a piece basis, suggesting that even communism must furnish an incentive over and above appeals to social loyalty and so-

cialistic idealism in order to stimulate high industrial production. The other was the fact that on the day of my visit all of the 7,000 employees were working without salary. It was explained that the entire day's wages were being given back to the government for use in still further advancing its Five-Year Program. Here was another Russian paradox—piece-work wages to stimulate individual production, return of wages to promote national production; piece-work wages a confession of communistic weakness, return of wages an evidence of its strength.

This indicated also the loyalty and enthusiasm with which the people have responded to this program. Several reasons account for this enthusiasm. Efficient propaganda explains it in part. The hope that poverty may be permanently eliminated stimulates it. May it not also be an outpouring of democratic energy in a people who had been autocratically oppressed for centuries, a manifestation of racial vitality which after the upheaval of the war has discovered a new channel in which to express itself?

So the Russian Five-Year Program is an effort on a vast national scale to solve the paradox of Russia's wealthy poverty. Its purpose is to develop and exploit the untouched resources of the country not for the benefit of a limited class of people but for the welfare of the entire nation. This is its stated aim.

Nevertheless, I must confess here to three disquieting questions.

The first is this: Why is there such concern over the development of heavy industries of iron and steel? Are these really essential for the maintenance of a communistic society? Can it be that Russia is developing these in recognition of the possibility of war? There is undoubtedly a war psychosis not only in Russia today but also in the countries bordering on Russia. A peace-loving American crossing many frontiers in Europe cannot but view with concern certain disquieting aspects of European relationships. War is the last thing that Russia wants now. Nevertheless the huge signs in four languages on the convention hall in Moscow said very plainly, " The

International Trade Union Movement presents to capitalism not peace but a sword."

The second question is this: When the program has been achieved and the industrial output at the end of the five or ten years equals or surpasses present expectations, will that immense output be really used to satisfy the needs of the Russian people? [2] Or will this enormously increased industrial capacity be used in an effort to undermine the economic structure of capitalistic nations and promote communism in other lands?

The third question is this: If communism sincerely uses this enormous production to satisfy the needs of the Russian people and thereby raises their standard of living to a level comparable with that of the laboring classes in capitalistic countries, will that achievement precipitate a revolution? It would seem probable if that should coincide with another period of depression such as capitalism is now experiencing.

[2] That their needs are overwhelming will be seen from a single item in the production report for 1930 as published in *The New York Times*, February 24, 1931. The state-owned shoe factories under the stimulus of the Five-Year Program increased the production of shoes from 37,540,000 pairs in 1929 to 62,061,000 pairs in 1930. Enormous as this is, and even assuming the improbability that none were exported, it would still mean only one pair of shoes for every two persons in the U. S. S. R.

VIII

COMMUNIZING THE PEASANTRY

HARVEST time had come again in Russia. For more than fifty miles I had been traveling in a modern motor bus, rushing through village after village at terrific speed, for speed laws have apparently not yet been codified in Russia. Fortunately all the villages were practically deserted, for the peasants who live in them were out in the fields with their wives and children gathering in the harvests. On both sides of the road I could see them in groups. Some were cutting the standing grain with hand scythes. Others, especially the women, were binding it into sheaves, and still others were piling it up into lofty stacks. On the flat, solidly beaten earth threshing-floors the more vigorous men and women were engaged in threshing.

About two hours out of the city engine trouble developed in the bus just as it was

passing one of these threshing groups. A halt of nearly an hour had to be made while the driver tinkered with the motor. So I descended from the bus, grateful for this brief respite after two hours of pounding over rough roads and cobblestone streets.

In front of me was a pastoral scene as old as humanity. Beside the road was a threshing-floor on which several peasants with old-fashioned flails were pounding out their wheat. I had never before examined a flail, this ancient implement which was in use centuries before Abraham came out of Ur of the Chaldees. As the men with their brawny, sun-tanned arms smote the grain on the earthen floor, the women with rakes and hoes removed the stalks already threshed, swept up the grain, and brought new sheaves to replace them. With the cheerful consent of one of the peasants who, with a gleeful twinkle in his eye, handed me his flail, I tried awkwardly the motions of flailing the grain at my feet. A few other Americans traveling on the same bus did likewise. Nothing quite so funny had ever been seen before in this part of Russia. The merriment and

A Typical Ignorant, Illiterate Russian Peasant with Primitive Equipment. For thousands of years the steppes of Russia have been cultivated by peasants of this type. To transform him into a communist is one of Russia's crucial problems

laughter of these friendly Russian peasants was as uproarious as that of an American movie andience over some excruciatingly funny experience of Charlie Chaplin.

However, it was more than an amusing incident in a day's automobile ride in Russia. It brought a revelation of the staggering problem of depending on primitive methods of agriculture for raising the food supply of 160,000,000 people. For thousands of years the Russian peasant has plowed his field, sown his seed, reaped his crops, threshed his grain, and brought his produce to market without a single change in method or tool. Machine farming in vast sections of Russia is both unknown and unimaginable. The scene by the road, before we Americans turned it into a burlesque, was a duplicate of a thousand scenes on autumn days throughout the centuries of long ago. Until now the mechanization of agriculture has been for the Russian peasant but a meaningless phrase. Today the driving force of communism is putting meaning into that phrase and is literally reconstructing the rural life of a nation.

So, by way of enormous contrast, a few miles farther on, I found myself in one of the new Russian government cooperative farms or "collectives," as they are called. Thus in less than half an hour I had moved across centuries of time. All the equipment of twentieth-century agriculture—wagons, tractors, harvesters, reapers, etc.—was here available. A huge silo of concrete, carrying the familiar hammer and sickle insignia of communism and the date 1929, rose majestically from the level plain. A modern cow-barn with concrete floor housed nearly 100 cows. In the horse-barn each horse had a box-stall of ample dimensions. A brook with muddy banks flowed through the pigsty, and offered a pigs' paradise. The farm included a tract of 500 acres, and 195 peasants had enrolled in this cooperative enterprise. The total personnel, including children, was 360. They had "pooled" their land, had contributed 95 cows, 19 horses, 85 calves, 48 pigs, hundreds of chickens, and were engaged in one of the greatest of Russian experiments, the practical application of communism to farming. I shared with them their noonday

meal in the farm's communal dining-hall, a simple, frugal dinner of cabbage soup, black bread and tea. Secretly I supplemented this from a supply of chocolate and malted milk tablets in my pocket. The morning and evening meals were secured in their own homes.

During the three years of operation since this farm was established it had steadily increased the financial returns to the cooperating peasants. Their income per capita ranged from 88 rubles in 1928 to an estimated 600 rubles in 1930. All the equipment had been furnished by the government. These two pictures, one of individualistic tillage and the other of communistic farming, separated by only several miles of territory and a half-hour of time, typified the yesterday and the today of Russian agriculture. Thus in thirty minutes one could bridge thirty centuries of time.

This farm, large as it is, appeared insignificant in size compared with other and larger farms, notably the so-called " Giant " in the south of Russia. One evening I attended a moving-picture house (*kinos* they are called here) and was astonished to find

that the chief feature on the program was not an adventurous or romantic or questionable scenario such as is nightly pictured in the American movies, but rather a two-hour reel picturing this giant farm. Countless throngs of people packed the theater at every performance, which lasted two hours. With consummate photographic skill, for which the Russian movies are world-famous, this film vividly and dramatically set forth the contrast between primitive agriculture, its dependence on rain, human labor, ancient equipment, and its meager results, with modern agriculture as typified by this "Giant" farm, with its vast irrigation projects, machine labor, power equipment, and its bountiful harvests. The farm was well named for its area is 400,000 acres with all the barns, cattle, horses, chickens, machinery, and human personnel that an enterprise of such magnitude would imply.

In the spring of 1930 press dispatches from Russia reported strenuous and forcible efforts by the government in mobilizing the peasants into these cooperative farms. Not much was reported about the peasants' re-

volt against this enforced collectivization. It is now known that there were peasant revolts, but few foreign correspondents cabled the details. Shortly thereafter, the news was cabled that the government had abandoned its methods of compulsion and had modified its plans. It was now proceeding with economic persuasion and moral pressure rather than brute force, in seeking to enroll the peasants in such communistic farming.

The real reason for this change of front was not political. Nor was it the peasants' opposition. A powerful economic reason prompted the modification of plan. In its agricultural and industrial program the government suddenly found itself in the relentless grip of an apparently unbreakable vicious circle. To import machinery for reorganizing its industrial life, Russia must export grain in order to pay for it. To export grain, obviously grain must be produced in excess of the food requirements of the Russian people. To produce more grain, primitive methods of agriculture must be abandoned. To abandon primitive methods involves collectivization. It is useless to

collectivize the farms without furnishing machinery. And machinery cannot be supplied unless it is imported. It cannot be imported unless it is paid for with exported grain. Thus the vicious circle proceeds. So the agricultural program has had to slow down. Collectivizing proceeds now only as rapidly as machinery can be provided until the ultimate objective is reached, which is the welding of the entire peasantry into an agricultural proletariat.

Notwithstanding the peasants' opposition and the inability rapidly to supply machinery, some remarkable results have already been achieved. According to the latest reported figures (February 10, 1931), slightly more than thirty per cent. of the Russian peasantry are now enrolled in the cooperative or collectivized farm enterprises. The percentage ranges from nearly ten per cent. in the area around Moscow to thirty-nine per cent. in the Ukraine and as high as seventy per cent. in the Northern Caucasus and the lower Volga regions. During the last ten days in January and the first ten days in February, 1931, a total of 726,000 new peas-

A typical peasant home with unsanitary barn built onto the house

THE OLD AND THE NEW IN RUSSIAN AGRICULTURE

By contrast, a modern government cooperative farm with its silo and well-constructed concrete-floored buildings

ant families joined the collective farms. They have pooled all their land, their livestock, and such hand equipment as can still be used to advantage. There has been a great increase in acreage under cultivation, which is now approximately at the standard of 1913. It is expected that this year will see 300,000,000 acres under grain with a conservatively estimated crop of 100,000,000 tons of grain to be harvested in the fall.

Several reasons are advanced as to why the collective movement must inevitably succeed over the old individualistic effort. It involves economy of man power. It furnishes machinery which, in contrast to human labor, can work on a twenty-four-hour schedule. It develops wider acreage and produce larger crops. It guarantees better seed, which is furnished by the government. It makes possible a wise coordination of agricultural production. It furnishes more leisure for the people and offers better care of children. It provides greater social privileges. It assures efficient utilization of land. Under the old system the small individual farms were widely separated, often at great

distances from one another and from the village. This consumed much time in going to and from, and thereby reduced the time spent in actual cultivation. Under the new system land is consolidated, time is saved, labor is conserved, and increased production is the result.

Here, then, is another phase in the strategy of communism as it seeks to establish its economic and political system throughout Russia. There can be no dictatorship of the proletariat so long as only ten per cent. constitute the proletariat while eighty per cent. of Russia's people remain individualistic peasants. There can be no permanent security for communism so long as only ten per cent. are communists while eighty per cent., through land-ownership and individualistic effort, remain capitalistic. So by welding together this mass of ignorant, illiterate people into collective farm enterprises, under government control, the last stronghold of capitalism in Russia is captured by the rapidly advancing forces of communism. The proletariatization of the peasantry through the collectivization of

agriculture is essential to the complete communization of Russia.

Nevertheless, the inevitable Russian paradox is again in evidence. Does this new system differ materially from the old system of serfdom?

It is positively maintained that the peasant joins the cooperative farm voluntarily in return for its superior privileges and that he likewise retains the privilege of voluntary withdrawal. When I made inquiry concerning the privilege of withdrawal it was explained that if a peasant voluntarily decides to withdraw, he may take back the cow he "pooled" but not the horse, because horses are very scarce. So the government gives him the cash equivalent of the horse at the government fixed price. But he soon discovers that it is exceedingly difficult to buy another horse. Even the peasant himself would admit that he cannot take back his land. Its boundary-stakes have been removed and it is now lost in the amalgamated land area of the collective farm. So the government gives him a new plot equal in area to the old. But the new is usually far

removed from his village and sometimes in another part of Russia. Thus withdrawal from a cooperative farm is permissible and possible, but its conditions are such as to discourage it and to make it expedient for the peasant to remain. What thus becomes of the independence of the peasant whose individual identity is merged in the collectivized group? Will he not long for the return of the old days? Wearily perhaps but freely he walked to his little farm and did what he pleased with hoe or scythe or flail; whereas now he does what he is told to do by the manager of the cooperative farm.

Thus it seems clear that if the cooperative farm movement succeeds and all of Russia's arable land is collectivized and agriculturally mechanized, the Russian peasant will cease to be a farmer. He will become a communized farm laborer. The proletariat of Russia will be divided into two sections, the industrial and the agricultural. Is there not here a danger of establishing another serfdom and a communistic feudalism that will replace the serfdom abolished in the days of Czarism?

IX

PROPAGANDIZING THE MASSES

THE opening night of the grand opera season in Leningrad found the opera house crowded to capacity. Through the government tourist agency I had been assigned a seat in the front row of the orchestra. Later during one of the intermissions I sat in the palatial box of the former Czar. It is a huge cubicle rising to the height of three galleries and securely protected on both sides by solid walls. Thus in other years the family of the Czar and their guests were spared all physical contact with other spectators. From above the box the coat of arms of royalty had been removed and had been replaced by the familiar hammer and sickle of the Communist Party. Naturally the performance did not begin until after the audience had stood at attention and had sung the famous hymn of the Third International.

From this place of departed majesty I gazed upon a scene as extraordinary as it was interesting. What a contrast with the opening night at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York! There speculators get fabulous prices for seats. He who is fortunate enough to secure a ticket is privileged on that single evening and under one roof, to view as colossal a display of wealth in the form of costly raiment and priceless jewelry as can possibly be imagined. Here in Leningrad poverty and not wealth came to the opera. Men came in factory clothes, and women wore the simple dress of the kitchen. Many of them could come in no other garments, for these were all they had. The proletariat were sitting in the seats of the vanquished aristocracy. Prices for tickets were most reasonable, and all these people, if they were members of the working class and showed their workers' cards, could secure seats at a reduction of forty per cent. from the announced prices. On the preceding day I had visited the enormous tractor factory where 23,000 were employed. In the dining-hall where 10,000 had their noon-

day meal, numerous posters were advertising the opera season. I wondered in how many factories in New York or Chicago grand opera was advertised in the lunchroom.

For the opening night the opera given was "Boris Godunoff." The performance was excellent, the singing superb, especially of the chorus, for the Russians from time immemorial have been a singing race. The part of Boris was taken by a Russian actor of unusual dramatic and vocal ability. But the amazing thing about the performance was the arrangement of the libretto and the score. In the New York performance the original version has the Simpleton, a half-witted hermit, emerge from the forest in the beginning of the final act and sing his dire prophecy about the reign of Boris. It is followed by the death of Czar Boris as the opera's conclusion. In Leningrad the performance combined the original with a revised version in which the Simpleton repeats his warnings at the very end of the opera as a solemn climax. As he sang his song of gloom the entire stage in the rear was illu-

minated with a dull red glare as if from a huge conflagration. Boris had died in the preceding act. Why should the dire prophecy be repeated? Solemnly the communist guide who accompanied me to the opera explained that the Simpleton was foretelling the doom not only of Boris but also of all Czarism through the coming of the Red Revolution! So I came away with the impression that in Russia even grand opera could become propaganda for communism.

Propaganda certainly was evident in the movies. A few evenings previous to the opera performance I had attended a motion-picture theater. It was a large, well-ventilated and illuminated building equipped with comfortable seats, a spacious lounge and a roomy lobby, quite comparable to the pretentious movie palaces of America. From morning until late at night each two-hour performance had a packed house, not a vacant seat being seen in any part of the theater. One reason for this was of course the five-day week, the rest-day " staggered " so every day is a holiday for one-fifth of the population. Another reason was the limited

number of theaters and other amusement enterprises, a condition which assures maximum patronage for all. At this movie theater the program included four films, all informing and educational and entertaining, and all of them obviously in the interests of communist propaganda. The first was a Russian news-reel featuring a communist celebration in Leningrad. The Red Army appeared in various scenes, while numerous achievements of the Russian five-year industrial program were pictorially reviewed. Then came a mighty, sweeping, and inspiring portrayal of the gigantic collective farm in southern Russia, called "The Giant," with its hundreds of thousands of acres of wheat fields. A typical ignorant, uncouth peasant was introduced. Skeptical and conservative, he views with great doubt and apprehension the new machine method of farming. Finally convinced and converted, he throws in his lot with the cooperative farm movement. Once more the paradox of disdainful admiration of America was in evidence. On the screen were American reaping-machines mowing and harvesting

the huge acreage of grain on this cooperative farm. Here was the admired product of hated capitalism actually building the agricultural communism of Russia. The third film by a clever and entertaining story demonstrated how easy it is for an illiterate peasant or an ignorant factory employee to learn the Russian alphabet. This was part of the vast campaign now going on in Russia against illiteracy. The final film, again how paradoxical, was an American newsreel showing an American championship swimming-match with various swimming and diving exhibitions. It is easy to understand how this film was introduced to support the government program for encouraging physical development among the youth of Russia. So the movie is being used to propagandize the masses in Russia.

The spoken drama likewise lends itself admirably to such purposes. A common theme is unstinting sacrifice for the cause of communism. It can easily be imagined what powerful dramatic climaxes a Russian playwright can develop as he unfolds the story of conflict between personal desire, love,

family loyalty, comfort, and loyalty to the socialist fatherland. Invariably the hero or heroine chooses the latter.

The propaganda motive seemed obvious also in the popularization of the museum. Probably no land on earth today is giving such thoughtful attention to the establishment of museums and their popular visitation. It is said that there are more than one hundred museums in Moscow. Every village in Russia will eventually have one or more of them featuring various phases of Russian cultural development and especially the industrial program.

The American tourist, escorted around by official guides, literally walks miles and miles through apparently endless corridors and spacious rooms of numerous museums and galleries. Art treasures here available for popular display are among the finest in Europe. And in the effective arrangement of exhibit material such as charts, posters, pictures, models, diagrams, etc., the Russians show themselves to be masters in pedagogy and in the psychology of impartation and reception. Thus the famous Museum of

the Revolution in Moscow graphically portrays the entire story of the revolutionary struggle of the masses against political oppression and tyranny in Russia during the long period since the seventeenth century. Startlingly realistic was the huge painting, perhaps ten by twelve feet in size, showing Stalin and a group of Bolshevist leaders sitting around a lamp-lighted table in the dead of night plotting the Communist Revolution. Cruelties imposed on peasants and industrial workers during the Czarist régime were vividly set forth. One room was especially interesting in that it graphically featured the costs and burdens of war. Under the caption "Gains of War" appeared lurid scenes of battle-fields, photographs of eloquently silent cemeteries and of huge stacks of human skulls. War was here set forth far more honestly with this display of its "tragicness" and ghastliness than in the customary portrayal of its alleged glory and honor. Any peace-loving American would truly commend such mighty propaganda for peace. Another picture calculated to impress deeply the visiting throngs was the

execution of Razin on the Red Square, one of the earliest labor agitators. Here was also a portrait of Lenin's brother, executed by the late Czar. Full of pathos was the scene showing a Czarist tax-gatherer taking away the last cow of a peasant family to pay taxes while the family kneel and piteously beg for mercy. In the art galleries it seemed as if prominent locations had been assigned to pictures portraying drunken debaucheries of the old Russian priesthood, and other dismal scenes like that of Czar Ivan the Terrible murdering his son, while masterpieces of art associated with the life of Christ had been relegated to inferior positions.

In all these museums and galleries the abiding impression left with me was not the magnificent array of art treasures and the pedagogically displayed exhibit material, but rather the never-ending streams of peasants, housewives, factory employees, students, and children. All of them, in groups of ten or twelve and under competent guidance, were being daily escorted through the buildings. At times it was almost impossible to proceed

from room to room because of the crowds. To these members of the proletariat every important exhibit was being explained with care and precision. Here was propaganda, culturizing the masses on a scale and by a method never before attempted in history. What must be the effect, for example, when a group of drably clad, hungry-looking, poverty-stricken, peasant women stand before a handsome glass showcase and view an assortment of dresses of Catherine the Great, while the communist guide points to a sign which tells that this Czarina had 15,000 gowns. Even if she had changed her clothes three times a day it would have taken fifteen years for her to wear them all only once. Here was a queen of the aristocracy who had as many dresses for her exclusive use as 15,000 women of the proletariat have for their inclusive use today.

On the other hand, the effect may sometimes be quite the opposite of what communism intends. Thus it seemed that there was an expression of genuine sadness, of sincere regret on the face of the official guide, when he pointed to the long row of tombs of the

Czars in the cathedral at Leningrad and to the conspicuously empty space that had been reserved for the last of the Romanoffs, who had been executed in 1917. Did his sadness and his reticence imply merely sorrow over the fate of the Czar, or did it suggest a sincere, yet unvoiceable, regret over the passing of a great era in history which the now broken continuity of tombs so eloquently yet silently revealed?

Of special interest was the antireligious museum in Moscow. It is said that there are eighteen such antireligious museums in Russia, all of them active propaganda agents in behalf of atheism. It was again impressive to see the throngs of people moving from room to room. This antireligious museum is housed in a former church. What irony that a building originally dedicated to a belief in God should now be prostituted to the propagation of atheism. Thousands of Russians in large or small groups are escorted by atheistic guides through this amazing museum.

Here I found an extraordinary array of pagan idols; pictures showing elements

which Christianity is said to have absorbed from other religions; instruments of torture by the Inquisition; statues of Bruno at the stake and Galileo in chains; gruesome, decayed remains of Russian saints removed from their tombs where multitudes in former years had worshiped in the superstitious belief that their bodies were incorruptible, only to find their hideous remains now on exhibition in glass showcases; posters showing the blessings of the church on war and soldiers kissing the Bible; hideous caricatures of the Pope and of Roman and Russian priests; samples of atheistic literature from all over the world suggesting the spread of atheism; pictures of the old Russian church refusing to part with its treasures to help the famine-starving multitudes; quantities of pictures showing the connection of the church with the former czarist tyranny, and a great collection of antireligious posters. The display in this museum is arranged with mighty climactic effect until in the last exhibit the great Five-Year Program is featured. Thus communism says in effect to the people in this final room, "Behold your god!"

Strastnoi Square in Moscow. The building with the tower, formerly the Strastnoi Convent, is the entrance to Moscow's famous Anti-religious Museum

One aspect of propaganda in Russia deserves special emphasis. No one can complain if communism through its control over the school, the press, the movie, the theater, the radio, the museum, and every other avenue of approach to the human mind, deliberately seeks to influence public opinion in favor of a single economic theory. Nor can an American object if communism publicly condemns the evils of capitalism as revealed in America. More than one ardently communistic youth with whom I talked, deplored the industrial depression in America. He knew that during the summer of 1930 there were approximately one million unemployed. Likewise more than one prophesied that the winter of 1930-1931 would see five million unemployed, a figure which has only too tragically been realized. All this had been told him by communist propaganda. There can be no objection to the reporting of such facts to the Russian people nor to interpreting them as weaknesses of the capitalistic system. But when it comes to deliberately encouraging false impressions and conveying erroneous information to the Rus-

sian people concerning conditions in capitalistic countries then a protest seems justifiable. As Prof. Paul Monroe in a recent issue of *International Conciliation* expressed it, " That constant misrepresentation of foreign peoples and conditions, misinterpretation of current events and cultivation of enmity to foreign peoples, is, in my judgment, the one great blot on Russian education."

Late one evening as I was returning to my hotel after a tour of the streets I chanced to meet a Russian laborer. Contrary to many others he seemed willing to talk freely to a foreigner. I spoke no Russian, but since he spoke German it was not difficult to carry on an extended conversation. After asking several searching questions about conditions in America owing to our widely advertised industrial depression he inquired in particular about the 1930 May Day celebration in Union Square in New York. It will be recalled that the police on that occasion dispersed a small mob of perhaps 2,000 New York communists and arrested five of them. A crowd of perhaps 98,000 bystand-

ers had filled the square. From all reports it was a typical, peaceful, curiosity-gratifying, mob of New Yorkers who can always be depended on to be present if anything startling is likely to occur. This Russian told me that he had been given the impression, and he apparently believed it, that there were at least 100,000 communists in New York; that they had been made desperate by capitalism's industrial depression; that they were ready to seize the government of New York City but were prevented only by the brutality of the New York police; that the police were supported by the entire United States army!

This Russian was a living testimony to the effectiveness of propagandizing the masses. It was not surprising. One of the highest Soviet officials in Russia in a formal statement to an American said: "People do not believe what they will but what they are told. And we propose to tell them!" [1]

It is apparent that they are doing so and are doing it successfully.

[1] Sherwood Eddy, *The Challenge of Russia*, p. 165.

X

EXIT GOD

THIS narrative of impressions of communism would be incomplete without reference to the religious situation. Nobody can visit Russia today without becoming personally aware of the now widely known crusade against religion. The use here of the word crusade presents another Russian paradox, in that crusade originally meant a campaign in behalf of religion. So these two concluding chapters will review the condition of religion in Russia.

A stupendous drama is unfolding in this land. Its vast area is like a huge stage; all of its people are the actors, while the rest of the world looks on as an anxiously interested spectator. The development of the mighty plot of this drama has proceeded to a point where the stage direction, as in the manuscript of a play, is clear and concise. It reads, "Exit God." These two words

summarize the religious situation in Russia. They are applicable to the present state of the Russian Orthodox Church, to the religious activities of the evangelical or sectarian groups, and also to Judaism. Professor Philip S. Bernstein, writing in *Harper's Magazine,* says: "Sabbath after Sabbath this writer worshiped in Jewish synagogues, and found but a handful of sad, old men. We are witnessing the collapse of formal religion in Russia."

This is a matter of grave concern to religious people everywhere, whatever their name or race or creed. The world is deeply interested in the political system of Russia. It may well feel anxious over the economic situation, in that capitalism and communism are everywhere hopelessly irreconcilable. But over the religious situation in Russia, it is apparently not merely interested or anxious; it has been deeply disturbed. Certainly not within the recollection of the present generation was there such an outburst of public indignation as that which swept across America and Europe in the spring of 1930. Church services, public mass-meetings, edi-

torials, and news reports in daily papers, and feature articles in current magazines all focused attention on the suppression of religion in Russia. Of peculiar significance was the fact that all faiths, Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant, were united in this expression of protest against the antireligious policy of Russia, recognizing in it a common menace to religion everywhere. And well might they recognize it. If communism's campaign against religion succeeds and the steadily diminishing generation of churchgoers, worshipers, and religious adherents shall finally vanish, formal religion, according to Doctor Bernstein, "within thirty years, save as there may be some violent change in the government's policy, will be dead in Russia." What this will mean for the religious life of the rest of the world no man is yet able to discern.

The effects of communism's well-organized crusade against religion are clearly evident to any traveler who journeys even for a brief period in Russia. Closed churches stand as silent, pathetic symbols of departed religionism. Transformed church edifices

This building was formerly a well-known evangelical church. It is now used as headquarters of an atheistic society

One of Russia's churches now used for other purposes. Note the absence of bells in the tower. This church was converted into a community dining-hall in a rapidly growing section, as evidenced by the apartment house construction behind the church

and converted convents now used as club-houses, apartment-houses, factory workers' clubs, community restaurants, and museums testify to the substitution of the culture of materialism for the life of the spirit. The forlorn, dilapidated churches which still maintain services, with their cracked stucco walls, leaky roofs, and the shabby paint of yesterday, furnish eloquent evidence of discontinued government aid and of declining public support. Empty belfrys open to the winds of the Russian steppes, their bells removed and melted into metal for the Five-Year Industrial Program, no longer fill the air with the music of their chimes. An astonishingly noticeable absence of youth marks the congregations which now consist largely of old people, of women who still derive some measure of comfort and grace from their worship of the *ikons,* and of men who, sad-looking and anxious, with pale, careworn yet refined faces, still go through the ritual of the old Orthodox Church as the last reminder of a Russia that for them is forever gone. The frankly atheistic affirmations of the younger generation who have

no religious convictions or loyalties, and who are indifferent to the ritualistic solemnity of the Russian Orthodox Church and the evangelistic fervor of the Russian evangelical church, reveal the extent to which communism has already undermined the religious faith of youth. Out in the country a group of girls were intensely interested in the party of Americans of which I was a member. When one of our number who spoke Russian asked them if they believed in God, their reply in the negative was as distressingly astonishing as it was convincingly revealing. The eighteen antireligious institutes or museums, of which the largest is in Moscow, and the extensive propaganda against religion through atheistic magazines, newspapers, moving-picture films, posters, lecturers, organizations like the Militant Atheistic Society, whose membership increased from 98,402 in 1927 to 3,000,000 in 1930—all cumulatively make their contribution to a vigorous crusade against religion that has had no parallel in human history. Dr. Sherwood Eddy, in his book *The Challenge of Russia,* says, " Certainly the church

never had to meet in the persecution of the Roman Empire, intermittent, spasmodic, brutal, or stupid as it often was, what it has to face in this relentless, implacable, ruthless persecution of cold intelligence."

To be sure it is possible and likewise still permissible to go to church in Russia, for I attended twelve church services during my own brief visit. Their congregations ranged from a mere handful with a single priest officiating, to crowds of several thousand people in the larger cathedrals where gorgeous ceremonies, much liturgy, and choral singing featured the services. The Cathedral of the Saviour, one of the great ecclesiastical edifices of the world, its gilded domes dominating the sky-line of Moscow, was thronged with thousands of worshipers. The Chapel of the Iberian Virgin, a small edifice on an alleyway remote from the main traffic highways, was crowded to suffocation, so that it was almost impossible to admit either a stranger or another worshiper. The famous *ikon* of the Madonna, now found here, was formerly in a shrine on the Red Square. So sacred was this shrine that it is said that

even the Czar when passing in his royal carriage had to pause, descend, and bow in reverence. In its place on the Red Square now blazes forth in white letters against the background of the red brick wall the famous phrase first coined by Karl Marx and given renewed emphasis by Lenin, "Religion is the opium of the people."

The imposing Cathedral of the Resurrection in Leningrad, visited on the Feast of the Assumption, was also crowded. Pathetic was the evidence of superstition which communism, notwithstanding its vigorous effort, has thus far found it difficult to eradicate from the Russian heart. Here a poor, humble, sad-looking woman was prostrating herself before a jewel-studded ikon of the Virgin. Before I turned and left the church I had counted thirty-one times as she rose to her feet and again stretched out full length on the mosaic floor.

It was therefore not difficult to perceive how communism with its emphasis on scientific and cultural progress could have no patience with such sincere but superstitious faith. Religion when it degenerates into

Cathedral of the Resurrection in Leningrad. It is a stately, magnificent edifice and on church holidays is invariably crowded with worshipers

such superstition can indeed become like opium paralyzing the life of the people. To understand fairly the religious situation in Russia it is thus essential to get the communist point of view and not be unduly influenced by the emotional reaction throughout the world in the spring of 1930 to which reference has already been made.

Nobody in Russia denies that thousands of churches have been closed. I visited several that are now museums, others that are workers' clubs and restaurants and still others which, with doors padlocked, were awaiting disposition of their properties. For various pretexts they had been closed. One effective method has been to circularize a neighborhood giving the community an opportunity to express a preference either for the church to remain, or for its conversion into a center for cultural and recreational purposes. The community usually found it expedient to "prefer" what it believed would meet with the approval of the authorities. Moscow before the Revolution was described as the city with "40 times 40 churches," which meant 1,600 churches. At

the time of my visit more than half of these were reported closed. Six months later on Easter Sunday, 1931, according to Walter Duranty in the *New York Times,* "only a scant few were open for worship."

It is reported that multitudes of priests have been persecuted, imprisoned, banished into exile, or killed. Unfortunately the exact number is not known. In many cases the charge has been that of secretly plotting the overthrow of the present government or of uttering publicly anticommunistic sentiments. Since evidence is almost impossible to secure, an outsider cannot refute the government charge that these victims were guilty. In Russia this is the equivalent of treason, and treason in all countries carries heavy penalties. It is well known that during the early years of the Russian revolution the church leaders worked for the restoration of the Czarist régime.

The religious background must be taken into consideration. Practically the only religion which the country knew before the Revolution was that of the old Russian Orthodox Church. It was identified with

Czarism. One of its pronouncements is said to have been " Czarism and Orthodoxy are inseparable." It had military protection, was unchangingly conservative and had no program of social betterment or justice. The antireligious museum in Moscow has much to display concerning this alliance of Czarism and ecclesiasticism. Anything in Russia reminding the present government of the former régime is considered the enemy of communism.

Furthermore, the church had amassed colossal wealth. Its properties were costly edifices, and some of their domes were covered with pure gold. Their interiors were ornamented with mosaic floors and walls, columns of precious stones, and shrines of silver and copper overlaid with gold. The priestly vestments must have cost fabulous sums. I saw several of them, now carefully housed in glass show-cases in museums, woven with strings of thousands of pearls and other jewels. All this concentrated wealth is interpreted by the communists as just so much wealth taken from the people and diverted into economically unproductive

channels. Then during the terrible famine which followed the War, when England and America were pouring relief funds into Russia and the American Relief Administration under Herbert Hoover's direction saved millions of Russians from death by starvation, the communist leaders appealed to the Orthodox Church to give of its wealth in order to buy food for the starving people. The church refused. Naturally communism regards religion typified by such a church as an enemy of economic and social progress.

The old church was also filled with superstition and idolatry. Its *ikons,* its ceremonialism, its priestcraft, its veneration of saints, and its belief in the miraculous preservation of their bodies moves to pity the heart of any lover of a vital religion that can transform men's lives and change human relationships. To be sure, there were thousands of priests, gentle, pious souls, who were real shepherds to their people. Even today some that I saw seemed by their noble countenances to be men of strong character and of real solicitude for the spiritual welfare of their people. But the church as an

organization was the custodian of superstition. For an hour I stood late one evening in an impressive cathedral watching the long procession of people file slowly past the bishop. Dipping a brush into a chalice of oil he painted a cross on each passing forehead. Each recipient of this priestly grace knelt, kissed the bishop's hand, and then passed out into the darkness of the Russian night. Regardless of any values which the psychology of religion may ascribe to such ceremonialism, communism with its emphasis on materialism can have no sympathy with it. Liberal Christianity would recognize its place in the spiritual development of humanity. Communism would sweep it away as pure superstition.

These objections could not apply to the more spiritual religion as proclaimed by the evangelical denominations like the Baptists, Mennonites, Methodists, and others who had gained many adherents in Russia after the War. Owing to rigid censorship, infrequent visits of foreigners, and difficulty of making personal contacts, facts as to the condition and progress of the evangelical groups are

not easy to ascertain. It is clear, however, that preachers have been imprisoned or are under "house arrest" involving periodic reporting to the police. Places of worship have been closed and congregations scattered. The same financial pressure applies to their ministers as to the orthodox clergy. The Baptist theological seminary no longer exists. Bible printing and distribution have been curtailed. Against such facts the future of the evangelical movement in Russia is dark and precarious.

Here the opposition of the authorities grew out of fear, and fear is always followed by reaction. These evangelical churches had developed an enthusiasm, a loyalty, an evangelistic passion, and a program of missionary expansion that might easily become a direct competitor of communism. It was not unusual for a communist orator to visit a factory during the lunch hour. To a group of factory employees gathered about him he would expound the principles of communism. At the same hour a simple gospel preacher would come. In another part of the factory he

would hold a stirring evangelistic meeting with spirited singing and straightforward gospel preaching. Obviously if the preacher drew a larger crowd the communist lecturer went away incensed at the effectiveness of this competition. Moreover these evangelical churches supported various forms of social service, which is now regarded as the duty of the state. Likewise objectionable were their affiliations with denominational bodies in capitalistic nations, and their receipt of moral and financial support. Such connections with other countries were regarded as evidence that capitalism was using these evangelical churches as tools for the eventual overthrow of communism. It must also be admitted that the intense emotional fervor of some of the evangelical groups and their emphasis on dogma, literalism, and on the mysteries of eschatology were just as incomprehensible to atheistic communism as the medieval ceremonialism of the Orthodox Church. The pacificistic attitude of some of the evangelicals also made the government concerned over their patriotism. So communism in its fear became alarmed.

These and other considerations brought about a drastic change of policy which now involves severe restriction. It is quite apparent that its objective is the extermination of religion in Russia. All tales of persecution, reports of repressive measures in force heretofore, may now be regarded as of secondary importance to the major issue which is that communism deliberately intends to make Russia a nation of atheists.

XI

A SUBSTITUTE FOR RELIGION

UNDER the influence of public opinion in other lands as reflected in the widespread agitation which swept across the civilized world in the spring of 1930, the forcible suppression of religion was modified, but without any change in the objective of completely eliminating religion from the life of the Russian people. No longer will news dispatches bring reports of the compulsory closing of churches or of the banishment of Orthodox priests or evangelical preachers, unless of course they are found guilty of anticommunistic activities. Instead methods are now employed against which the religious constituencies of the world can protest only by seeming to interfere with the domestic affairs of a sovereign nation. So the attempt to eliminate religion from Russia now seems to proceed along four clearly discernible lines.

1. *Statute Limitation.* The original constitution adopted after the Revolution provided for religion as follows:

> In order to provide the workers actual freedom of conscience the church is separated from the state and the school from the church, while freedom for religious and antireligious propaganda is recognized for all citizens.

The amended constitution adopted in 1929 provides that

> freedom for religious confession and antireligious propaganda is recognized for all citizens.

There is all the difference in the world between freedom for *religious propaganda* and freedom for *religious confession.* The practise of religion is thus limited to worship and confession only, and in prescribed places of worship. All evangelistic work, all philanthropic activity, all association of churches into unions or conventions, all cooperative financial assistance, and all religious instruction of children under eighteen years of age are now prohibited. The only exception is that parents may give their children religious instruction at home. The government is

thus in position to claim that religious worship in Russia is as free as it ever was, yet at the same time the spread of religion is effectively restricted. This strikes at the heart of evangelical Christianity which depends for its progress on evangelism and religious education. It leaves the Orthodox churches undisturbed, since they have had no Sunday schools and rarely have had preaching services. In only one of the twelve churches which I visited was there any large proportion of young people. This was discovered in a church where a thoroughly evangelistic sermon was part of the service, a rare feature in an Orthodox church. In all the others, young people were conspicuously absent, thus confirming in a measure a communist slogan, " Capture the rising generation, and religion will die out naturally in a few years."

2. *The Abolition of Sunday.* This is now a noticeable phenomenon in Russia. The adoption of the five-day week, with one day of rest after four days of work, and with the system so arranged that different groups of workers have different rest-days, is slowly

removing Sunday from Russian life. Church-bells no longer ring. Factories, shops, stores, banks, all are open every day in the year except on official holidays. Traffic in the streets is like that of any other day. As I stood at the window of my hotel room on Sunday morning and watched the moving traffic, it was hard to realize that this was the day dedicated in other lands to the worship of God. Any foreigner who remains in Russia for any extended period must soon lose all conception of time, which comes to be but an indefinite succession of days indistinguishable one from another. To meet this difficulty the churches place large emphasis on the Saturday night services, which have always been popular. They symbolized the Old Testament in the Russian Orthodox liturgy while the Sunday morning services symbolized the New Testament. As a result of the calendar innovation the people now seem to attend church services in larger numbers on Saturday evenings, while diminishingly attended Sunday morning services are still maintained for the dwindling few among the one-fifth whose day of rest

happens to fall on what formerly was Sunday. To counteract the surviving influence of church holy days like Easter which still bring crowds into the churches, antireligious demonstrations are staged, and widely advertised slogans like, " Easter means extra output " and " One hundred per cent. attendance at work on Easter Sunday," attempt to lure the crowds away.[1]

3. *Financial Pressure.* Another method employed, perfectly legal, apparently unprotestable by outsiders, and yet more effective than force in accomplishing the same purpose is that of financial pressure. Church meeting-places or buildings are heavily taxed. A poverty-stricken congregation, unable to meet the taxes, forfeits the use of the building and *voluntarily disbands.* At a crowded service in the Cathedral of the Resurrection in Leningrad the priest appealed for a generous offering to meet the tax of 34,000 rubles.[2] Priests and ministers are also heavily taxed. I visited an evangelical church whose tax now was said to be

[1] Walter Duranty in *New York Times,* April 13, 1931.
[2] John Johnson, in *The Christian Standard,* September 20, 1930.

1,000 rubles and whose minister had to pay a tax of 200 rubles. It is only a question of time until under this financial pressure the church must go out of existence. Furthermore, all ministers and priests are classed with private traders, former aristocrats, and others who are denied the privilege of voting. They are debarred from all privileges accorded to the worker class. They are deprived of the use of the mails, the telegraph, and the telephone, of letters, money orders or parcels.[3] This means severe hardship especially for those sent into exile. Their children cannot attend school; their families cannot receive free medical treatment; they are not given bread ration cards. Thus life for them becomes an intolerably expensive existence. What small-salaried priest or evangelical preacher can long hold out under such restrictions?

Of course it is declared that these restrictions are only temporary. In time bread-rationing will disappear, and there will be free schools for all. Until then the members of the proletariat, for whom the state

[3] Sherwood Eddy, *The Challenge of Russia*, p. 174.

AN ANTI-RELIGIOUS POSTER

It pictures a drunken man mercilessly beating his wife, while in the background Jesus approves and displays the New Testament where it gives Paul's classic admonition, "Wives, be in subjection to your husbands." The anti-religious crusade thus gives a literal interpretation to Ephesians 5: 22; 1 Peter 3: 1, and Colossians 3: 18

exists, must be given preference. Yet one cannot overlook the irony of this. When the time comes to remove the restrictions will any people now restricted be left from whom to remove them?

4. *Anti-Religious Propaganda.* Next to publicity for the Five-Year Industrial Program no phase of propaganda seems more in evidence than that against religion. It is carried on by direct instruction in schools, by public addresses, by articles in the press and magazines, by radio broadcasting, and by an extensive use of brilliantly colored and strikingly pictorial posters. They were to be seen everywhere, in government buildings, in public corridors, in parks, on street corners, in shops, on the walls of sanitariums, in workers' homes and clubrooms, and in museums. Wherever people gathered they were made aware of the crusade against religion. Then there are organizations like the Pioneers or Boy Communists, corresponding to the American Boy Scouts, summer camps for boys and girls, and the Y. M. C. A., which means Young Men's *Communist* Association and *not* Young Men's *Christian*

Association, in which a steady antireligious propaganda is consistently promoted.

To what extent Russian youth has been influenced by this propaganda it is impossible for a foreigner to determine independently. Judging by conversations I had with young people who could speak English or German, and by their enthusiastic defense of their atheistic convictions, it seems that irreligion is surely making inroads into the heart and mind of the rising generation. It is inexpressibly sad to find such alert, intelligent, promising young men and women, so enthusiastically confident of the future of Russia and yet so zealously affirmative of their disbelief in God. What might not Russia become if this young generation, freed from the shackles of a politically despotic Czarism and the bondage of a medieval ecclesiasticism, had an ethically minded belief in God and a vital faith in Jesus Christ and in the possibility of adjusting their new civilization to His way of life?

Other important factors in this propaganda are the antireligious institutes and museums, of which there are now eighteen

in Russia. The most widely known is in Moscow, described in a preceding chapter.

A pathetic feature of this crusade against religion is that with so much of its indictment of superstition, idolatry, ecclesiasticism, and medievalism in religion, the evangelical Christian of today is in accord. All this accumulated religious chaff of the centuries should be destroyed. But communism is destroying the wheat with the chaff and is either unconsciously or deliberately unable to realize this. It was reported to me in Moscow that a well-known American had had an extended interview with one of the high officials of the Russian government in the course of which he had tried to explain the difference between the formal religion which communism sought to destroy and that vital, liberalizing, and energizing religious faith which had played so important a part in the development of the world's life. The Russian official was either unwilling or unable to comprehend the distinction.

One aspect of the influence of the antireligious museum in Moscow may have far-

reaching consequences. On both sides of the little park in front of the old convent are buildings formerly housing the nuns and monks associated with the church. These are now used as dormitories for foreign students at the university. Thus day after day during their university course these Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Turkestan, Caucasian, and other young students come under the insidious influence of this antireligious propaganda. Years later this influence will be felt in the mission fields of the non-Christian world, as these graduates from Moscow have dealings with the graduates of Christian mission schools.

One more phase of this religious situation needs mention. The greatest of Russia's paradoxes is here seen. Communism is substituting itself as a new religion for the Russian people. One cannot say that it has a theology, for it is so thoroughly atheistic. Nevertheless it has all the other characteristics of religion. It has its sacred scriptures. The writings of Karl Marx may be called its Old Testament and the writings of Lenin its New Testament. The latter are

now being translated into thirty-five foreign languages. When that is accomplished probably only the Bible and John Bunyan's immortal *Pilgrim's Progress* will exceed in number the translations of Lenin's works. Communism has its dogmas, as rigid and orthodox as any which medieval Christianity ever maintained. And like the Christianity of the Middle Ages it permits no heresy. Its secret trials are far more mysterious than those of the Inquisition, and the heretic is quickly removed. There is no toleration of modernism by fundamentalism in communism. It has its rituals, for I heard of communistic baptismal ceremonies for infants and I passed two funeral processions, the corpse in each case in a flaming red coffin, on their way to the cemetery where communism was to commit its dead back to the eternal nothingness from which it believed its dead had come.

One might extend the parallel even further and suggest that communism has a social program, a code of ethics to prevent human exploitation, an eschatology, a belief in an Armageddon, a conviction of an inevitable

conflict between communism and capitalism. It is of course assumed that the forces of communism will emerge victorious, and achieve world dominion. Thus communism will usher in an era of human blessedness such as the extremely conservative eschatologist so fondly imagines.

Communism also has its hero-worship. A great mausoleum of finest marble has just been erected on the Red Square in Moscow where the remains of Lenin will forever be viewed by the passing throngs of worshipers. As already indicated, the one object most frequently seen in Russia was Lenin's picture. It seemed to be everywhere. When Lenin died the Soviet Congress declared: "He was the greatest Leader of all countries, of all times and of all peoples. He was the Lord of the new humanity, the Saviour of the world." So the very term which Christianity for two thousand years has applied to its Founder, communism in Russia now applies to Lenin.

Communism also has its evangelistic passion. It seemed so strange to discover in Russia a fervor and a zeal similar to that

which marked evangelistic Christianity in America a generation ago. As Radek, chief of propaganda, said to Phillips Gibbs: "Communism, you see, is a religion. Our young men must preach its gospel. They are willing to die for it." For communism is out to save the world from the sins of capitalism. Its international congress is like a world missionary convention. It has a consuming zeal and a genuine missionary enthusiasm. Many readers of this book will recall the challenging motto of the Student Volunteer Movement, suspended above the platform at each of its quadrennial conventions, "The Evangelization of the World in this Generation." To an American visiting Russia and communing with her communistic youth, it seems as if they too have a motto, an ideal, an objective that challenges their loyal response and enlists their enthusiastic support, "The Communization of the World in this Generation." As *International Conciliation* for December, 1929, expressed it: "I doubt if there ever was a religious movement in the world which sought to inculcate its tenets more, or even

as assiduously, in youth, as the communist party is doing in Russia. Youth is made not only to believe in the new political faith, but to thrill to it, to be ready to fight and to die for it. Youth is growing up with the notion, which in Russia remains undisputed, that the Soviet Union is in the vanguard of mankind, the champion of the holiest principle and the holiest cause the world has ever known." And Walter Duranty, writing in *The New York Times* May 4, 1931, says, " Bolshevism feels the way Mohammedans and Christians themselves have felt—that other religions are dreadful and damnable, from which men's souls must be saved whether they wish it or not."

Thus communism constitutes a real competitor that Christianity must reckon with in its own missionary plans for expansion. As

NOTE. Interpretation of poster on following page:

The poster on the next page conveys two antireligious messages. In the upper part is shown a woman surrounded by a ring of all the priests of human history. They are all present, Indian medicine-man, Chinese Buddhist, African witch-doctor, Japanese Shintoist, Protestant Minister, Roman Catholic Priest, Jewish Rabbi, Hindu Brahman, Russian Orthodox Priest, and Mohammedan Muezzin. The idea conveyed is that woman to achieve her larger freedom must break the control of priestcraft and emerge into the emancipation of a larger life. In the lower part the artist pictures the church as a giant octopus that reaches out its slimy arms, dragging in the populace from whom it sucks their wealth to support priestcraft and ecclesiasticism.

ANOTHER ANTI-RELIGIOUS POSTER

Its indistinctness is due to its brilliant coloring, which does not readily reproduce in half-tone. For an interpretation of this poster, see foot-note on opposite page

was said by Rev. C. T. Benze at the Foreign Missions Conference at Atlantic City, N. J., January 15, 1930, "As I look at Russia today I feel that we as a Christian world are going to stand face to face with the largest missionary problem that the Christian world has ever had." [1] Mission boards are well aware of the spread of communism on mission fields.

From these considerations it is clear that Christianity faces in Russia a difficult future. The antireligious movement seems to be gathering such momentum that it must run its course. A generation is growing up to whom God is neither a reality in individual life nor a factor in changing economic facts and human relationships. Nevertheless I am confident that Christianity, having survived nineteen centuries of human history with all its eras of persecution, political revolution, and atheism, will also survive this period in Russia, although it faces here a severe test. One greater than Lenin reaffirmed that profound experience of humanity that man cannot live by bread alone.

[1] Foreign Missions Conference Report for 1930, page 160.

And when the Russian program of industrial development and scientific progress has accomplished its purpose, when the immediate and urgent task of supplying the enormous physical needs of the people of Russia has been achieved, these same people will then rediscover that man has spiritual needs as well as those physical and cultural requirements which the government is so ambitiously endeavoring to satisfy. They will learn anew that something in life is missing which neither industry nor science can supply. When everybody in Russia has sufficient bread, enough clothing, adequate shelter, and abundant leisure, all now so lacking, what will they live for? They will then seek that deeper meaning to life which only a vital religion can offer.

It is not difficult for an outsider to appreciate that the basic material needs of life for these people are so pressing that there is not time even to think of the more spiritual needs. They are being left in abeyance. Russia is thus fated for a period of irreligion. But it is only temporary. When those spiritual needs reassert themselves

Russia will prove to be one of the greatest areas of the world that has ever challenged an expanding missionary Christianity. It has well been said by an American university professor that communism in suppressing religion will do more in ten years for the cause of religion than Czarism did in a hundred years by supporting it.

There seems to be a growing conviction among competent observers that the present trend toward irreligion will prove to be temporary and that eventually a vital religion will again appear in Russia. Quotations from four recent commentators on conditions in Russia suggest this conclusion. Thus Phillips Gibbs, in his book *Since Then,* ventures to prophesy that, " it will be on the rock of religion that the present leaders of Russia will dash themselves to pieces. For the human mind itself cannot do without some form of religion and will not be denied a spiritual conception of life in the long run, despite the scepticism of the modern age and the challenge of materialism." Writing in *Harper's Magazine,* Prof. Philip S. Bernstein said: " To this writer, himself a teacher

of organized religion, there is something darkly fascinating about a nation's attempt to abolish God. Will they succeed? Will they really prove that we believe in God only because we have been taught to believe in God, that man is not fundamentally religious? Or, once their immediate wants are satisfied, will they find deeper needs which bread cannot satisfy, or scientific materialism explain; will they learn, as this writer anticipates, that man cannot live without God?" A Russian and a member of the former royal family declares the present situation to be temporary. Writing in the *New York Times,* Alexander, Grand Duke of Russia, pictures the coming spiritual hunger of the Russian people: "By purely artificial measures introduced into the education of children, by a constant anti-God and anti-spirit campaign, it is possible to atrophy temporarily the spiritual part of the human being; but it is impossible to exterminate it altogether, because spirit and soul are the fundamental reasons for the life of men. The moment will come when a man thus atrophied begins to feel the pangs of

a spiritual hunger and thirst, and no material fetish in the shape of machinery, radio talk, or moving pictures can ever satisfy these needs." In his book, *The Challenge of Russia,* Sherwood Eddy also prophesies the return of religion to Russia. He writes: "In any event, it seemed to the writer that the proverbial interest of the Russian in religion was so vital and deep that nothing could ever uproot it from his heart. It seemed that no tyranny could be maintained forever even over a long-suffering population, and that once real liberty were granted, religion would reassert itself again and find expression, as it always has in history, along with every other elemental and fundamental capacity of the human spirit. In the opinion of many competent observers communists will have to take their choice between an endless tyranny seeking to make standardized robots, which no really awakened, critical, and self-governing people with any initiative will permanently tolerate, and a liberty that will witness, if history repeats itself, the reappearance of religion among the classes where it has been temporarily eliminated."

Late one Saturday evening I found myself in a large Orthodox church listening while the priest chanted the litany and the choir rendered some extraordinary antiphonal singing. The church was crowded with people, some kneeling, others standing. In the dim light, for the only illumination came from hundreds of tiny candles held in the hands of the worshipers, it seemed to me that I was in some first century catacomb at a meeting of the early Christians. It was a weird sight, as strange as it was impressive, and one that cannot be duplicated anywhere in America. And then as I looked around, my gaze followed the priest as he retired through the arched passageway into the inner sanctuary where stood the altar. High above the altar was a most magnificent and beautifully colored painting of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. Instantly came the realization that this weird scene summarized the entire religious situation in Russia today. Communism is deliberately attempting to take away from this noble and friendly people its Great Shepherd. The imaginative Christian could easily visualize the scene if

Jesus of Nazareth were to walk the streets of Moscow as he walked the streets of Jerusalem. He would be moved with deep compassion as he gazed upon the Russian multitudes. If the communist crusade against religion succeeds, they will soon become as sheep without a shepherd. Communism may for a time serve as a substitute for religion; but no Lenin can ever become the spiritual shepherd of a people.

So it seems reasonable to conclude that somewhere in the future, although no one can suggest even an approximate date, real religion will once again emerge in Russia. The mighty drama will proceed to a climax where the stage direction will read, " Re-enter God." Communism, now so concerned with industrial, material, and cultural needs, will eventually discover that the achievement of all of its objectives will bring no solution for those eternal questions that throughout the ages have perplexed the human soul.

God will then again be given a place in the life of Russia.

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